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THREE BURDENS.

BY G. W.

The burden of Life.—Hours of pain,
Strong struggles for victories vain,
Dull doom of dust to dust again,
A ship of insecurity
On stormy sea.

The burden of Love.—A bright morn,
That looks its loveliest at its dawn,
Ah, better had it ne'er been born!
For soon drive mists of misery
O'er darkened sea.

The burden of Christ.—Blinding tears,
A longing and love through long years,
A firm, faithful front to all fears—
Then glorious eternity
Of golden sea!

WON BY WEALTH.

A Tale of a Wedding-Ring.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT," "WEAKER THAN A WOMAN," "THE SHADOW OF A SIN," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

THERE came an evening when Paul Waldron sat in the beautiful flower-garden, a prey to most anxious thoughts. The sun was setting, the birds were singing in the green depths of the shady trees. He had returned home early that evening, and had found his wife, with a sad pale face, standing listlessly at the cottage window. No tea was prepared for him, and the smile that usually greeted him was absent from her beautiful lips. He loved her too dearly to offer any remonstrance—he went up to her and kissed her.

"You are not looking well to-day, Ismay," he said, gently.

He was almost startled when she flung her arms round his neck with a low passionate cry, and hid her face on his breast.

"You are not well, Ismay," he repeated. "Never mind tea for me. Come out, and I will try to cheer you. The room is warm—come into the fresh air, and—oh, my darling give me one bright look, or all the world will be dark to me!"

As they walked along he said to her—

"I cannot understand you, Ismay. You are so changed, you are so variable, my darling, so unlike your sweet, bright self. One moment you are here, with your arms clasped round my neck—loving, tender, all that my heart desires; the next you are cool and haughty, as though you were a princess and I your slave. At times you seem to love me, and then again you seem to hate me. One day I think you are perfectly happy—you smile and sing, and your face is more beautiful than ever in its sweet content; the next you are silent sad, engrossed with melancholy thoughts. I cannot understand you. Are you withholding any secret from me, Ismay?"

She clasped her arms round his neck, and drew his face down to hers. She said that he was the truest, the dearest, the best of husbands, and that she loved him, and ended with passionate tears.

He sighed deeply as he soothed her. What had come to this lovely young wife of his? He little dreamed of the terrible struggle going on in the heart he believed to be all his own.

It seemed to her that her soul was rent in twain; she longed with an intensity of longing for the wealth, the rank, the position, the grandeur that had been described to her. She was not surprised at what she had heard; there had always been in her mind a kind of intuitive knowledge that her mother was a lady, and that she herself was not in her right place. It seemed so cruel that she should be deprived of all the glorious advantages she had longed for, because she loved her husband and would not leave him.

How happy she would have been, installed at Bralyn, mistress of that grand mansion! How the great people of the great world would have admired her! What jewels, what dresses she would have had! No wonder that when she thought of all she had lost she grew sad, silent, and unhappy! the little cottage became unbearable then, the needful little economies most hateful, the husband for whom she had sacrificed so much a source of aversion.

Then a sudden fit of remorse would seize her: she would prove her love for him by the most loving words, the most tender caresses; she would laugh and sing, all to show him that she was happy; she would utter a thousand extravagances about their little home and her affection for it. And then would follow the reaction, and she would be intensely wretched again. So matters went on for three long weeds, until her health began to fail.

A nobler woman, having once made the sacrifice, would have abided by it. She wavered even while she believed herself to be most firm.

She looked ill, her face was always either flushed or white, her hands trembled; she was nervous, hysterical, unlike herself. In vain her husband tried everything to release her; he was, if possible, more unhappy than herself.

It had been such a glimpse of Paradise to her; now the gates were shut, and she was debarred from entering. She had not said one word to Paul; he was still in utter ignorance.

So the fourth week dawned, and she knew that before it had ended she must be either rich without her husband, or poor with him.

In the meantime Mr. Ford had told the old lord all: he had painted the girl's beauty in vivid colors; he had described her anger, her indignation, her resolve never to leave her husband, never to break his heart; he had delivered the message word for word. Lord Carlswood smiled grimly,

"I like that," he said; "it is the true Carlswood spirit. But she will give in. She seemed to waver at the last, you say? She will give in. I have thought of a plan," he added.

"You shall wait a month, so as to give her time to think over all she has lost, and then you shall go again, and this time you shall invite her to Bralyn, and escort her here.

"You shall bring the boy too for a month's visit—not the husband, mind. He cannot refuse my grandchild permission to visit me; and, if she comes, I will undertake to say that she will never go back. Let her once taste such a life as she will lead here, and she is mine."

Sorely against his will Mr. Ford consented. He went once more to Ashburnham, and found his way to the pretty cottage in the wood. Ismay's face flushed deepest crimson when she saw him. She held out her hands with a gesture almost sublime in its despair.

"You must not come to tempt me again!" she cried. "I am not strong. Pray leave me."

"I am here only to invite you and your son to Bralyn," he returned. "Lord Carlswood will let the question of adoption rest for a time; but he wants to see you and your little Lionel."

"Not my husband?" she asked with whitening lips.

"No, he will not receive Mr. Waldron. You can please yourself of course as to accepting the invitation or not.

"I should like to go," she said, eagerly. "I have longed to see a little of the beautiful great world. I must go, and take my boy with me. Tell me—tell me all about Bralyn."

He described the place to her; he hid from her no details of her grandfather's wealth, position, and grandeur.

"I must go," she cried again. "Paul will not object to me going there when he knows."

"You have not told your husband?" questioned Mr. Ford.

"Not one word," she replied. "Do you think he will be unwilling for me to go?"

"I cannot tell; you must be the better judge. You will have to ask his permission."

She sat for some minutes in thoughtful silence, and then with a grave, pale face looked at the lawyer.

"I should like to go to Bralyn," she said. "I should like to see just once what the grand world is like. Of course I shall come back again. Considering the great sacrifice I have to make, I think I may allow myself this pleasure; but I am afraid, if Paul knew what my grandfather has proposed, he would never let me go. I have been thinking that you might tell him the story—inform him who my mother was, and of Lord Carlswood's invitation, without saying anything about his condition for adopting my boy and myself."

As she spoke, her lips grew white. Yes, she was sure to come back, she repeated to herself. She wanted only one glimpse of the great world, and then she would come back.

"You think, if Mr. Waldron knew what Lord Carlswood has proposed, he would not consent for you to pay even this visit?" said Mr. Ford.

"I am quite sure of it; he would prevent my going."

"Why?" asked the lawyer, briefly.

"He would be afraid that I should never come back," she replied.

"But you do intend to return—you have no idea of accepting Lord Carlswood's offer."

"Not the least," she said; "I told you I would never break my husband's heart."

But it struck him there no longer the same fire and animation in her words.

"You will come this evening," she said, "and tell my husband all."

* * * * * *

"Paul," said Ismay, as they sat together watching the sunset, "do you see that stranger at the garden-gate? He is coming to tell you the strangest story you ever heard in all your life."

* * * * * *

Paul Waldron heard Mr. Ford in stupefied silence, in bewildered dismay. Once, as he listened, a passionate cry of despair came from his lips, and the lawyer's heart was touched with pity. When the story was finished, Paul forgot the stranger's presence; he turned to his wife with love and tenderness unutterable.

"So, my darling," he said, "my beautiful love, you are a great lady after all."

"I am your wife, Paul," she rejoined, her lovely face softening at the sight of his great emotion.

"And this lord has invited you—you and our boy—to visit him—you without me?"

"Perhaps he wants to see me first," she returned. "It may be that he will ask to see you next."

"You without me!" he repeated. "Oh, my darling, do not think I feel it because he is rich and great! That would make no difference to me. I value no rank. I value you my darling. If he should take you from me!"

"He cannot" she whispered. "Who can take me from you? Am I not your wife—your own wife?"

His great love, his passionate despair, touched her: she felt that she would rather die than leave him. Paul forgot that they were not alone; he knelt at her feet, clasped her hands in his own and covered them with passionate kisses, and with passionate tears.

"My darling, how should I live if I lost you? You are the life of my life. You are the light, the warmth, the centre of my soul—my heart lives in you. I love you so, sweet, that if you were to be taken from me I should go mad. I am frightened when I think how I love you—frightened at myself. May Heaven keep you from any one who would come between us! You are fair and fragile, I am strong with a man's strength; but, if you bade me, I would lay myself at your feet—I would give you my life!"

"And I love you, Paul," she whispered.

He turned to Mr. Ford.

"You see sir, she loves me—loves me unworthy as I am. This great man cannot—will not take her from me! You see for yourself she loves me."

"I see," was the grave response. To himself Mr. Ford said, "May Heaven have mercy on any man who trusts his happiness to a woman's keeping."

"You will not go for long, Ismay?" Paul said.

She was so touched by his great passion, his marvellous love, that she said—

"I will not go at all, unless you are quite willing, Paul."

But he was too generous, too noble, to accept the sacrifice from her.

"You shall go my darling, and take the boy with you. I can trust you—oh, thank Heaven I can trust you! You will come back to me, and you will know then that all the world can never give you the value of my love."

"I know that now," she whispered; and he was content.

She said afterwards to Mr. Ford—

"It was well we kept our secret and said nothing of Lord Carlswood's conditions; if he had known them, he would never have let me go.

And Mr. Ford sighed again as he said to himself—

"Heaven help the man who trusts his happiness to a woman's keeping!"

* * * * * *

Of the parting of Paul and Ismay Waldron Mr. Ford could never endure to think. He was a strong, cool, shrewd, calculating man, but when he recalled that scene he was filled with pain. The grief of the husband's honest, manly heart, the silent anguish on the handsome face, the despairing love with which he clung to wife and child—all came vividly before him. More than once the lawyer had been tempted to tell her not to go to Bralyn—more than once Ismay was tempted to clasp her arms round Paul's neck and promise never to leave him. He said nothing, but he looked like a man on whom sentence of death had just been passed.

He exhausted his resources in order that his wife might be nicely dressed. He had bought a dress of soft lustrous silk, and they both thought in their simplicity that elegance could go no further.

"This great lord will see that I have taken care of you," said the young husband, half sadly, half fondly.

The morning of departure came, and his white face was pitiful to see.

"It is only for a visit," said Ismay, and he clasped her in his arms.

"Ismay darling, you will not let them turn your heart from me—you will not learn to love wealth and luxury so dearly that you can never love me again?"

She soothed him as women know how to soothe the fears of those who love them.

Mr. Ford, who watched the scene, thought he had never beheld a greater contrast. The husband was pale and haggard, full of a great passion, a great grief—the wife was beautiful, bright, and radiant, her loveliness enhanced by her tasteful dress, her smiles brighter from the consciousness

of novelty. The little child looked from one to the other with wonderful eyes.

"How can she leave him?" thought Mr. Ford to himself. "She has a stronger nature than I thought."

He turned away when Paul Waldron held his wife in his arms and tried to say farewell.

"You must enjoy yourself as much as you can, Ismay. Do not sadden yourself by thinking of me here all alone. I shall be happy in thinking of you; and, oh, my darling," he cried to her! Remember the whole world can give you nothing so precious as my love."

And then he watched her until she had passed out of his sight. His love for her was so great that if in that hour he could have foreseen all he had to suffer he would have died.

Mr. Ford was surprised to find how soon Mrs. Waldron recovered her spirits. She had wept bitterly at parting from her husband, but the tears were soon dried. She enjoyed the change and novelty, and the admiration she excited; her vanity was flattered by the admiring glances cast upon her during the journey. No thought of the lonely heart mourning for her refusing to be comforted came to disturb her. They reached Bralyn in safety, and her delight at the sight of that magnificent mansion was unbounded.

Lord Carlswood almost lost his self-possession when his eyes fell first on that beautiful face.

"It is Katrine," he murmured—"Katrine risen from the dead!"

Ismay had all the Carlswood grace of manner and of movement. She went up to him at once.

"Will you love me a little for my mother's sake?" she said, quietly.

He kissed the white brow; he looked at the violet eyes with their golden light; he laid his hand on the shining masses of waving hair.

"I shall learn," he said, "to love you best for your own sake, and no other. Is this your son? You look so young Ismay."

"I am not twenty yet," she replied with a smile; and the smile made her so beautiful that the old man looked at her in wonder. He took the boy in his arms.

"He has something of the Carlswood face," he said, musingly.

Ismay proved, to her grandfather's delight, that she too had some of the old Carlswood spirit and pride. Although the novelty, the magnificence, the luxury, must have struck her with wonder, she said nothing. He had dreaded vulgar admiration, outbursts of wonder—he need not have been afraid.

When Ismay saw anything that she did not understand, she asked quietly what it was. He was delighted with her; there was no trace of anything vulgar about her. He had half expected that she would speak in broad provincial fashion, but her accent was as good as his own.

She repressed the startled cry that rose to her lips when she was taken by the housekeeper to the superb suite of rooms prepared for her.

There was a day and night nursery fitted up with every comfort and luxury for the boy, and there was a neat, trim, smiling maid to attend to him. There was a suite of four rooms arranged for Ismay herself, magnificent and luxurious as though they had been for a queen—a boudoir with rose silk hangings, rare pictures, fragment flowers, exquisite statuary, and furniture of the most modern and beautiful design; a sleeping-room all white and gold; a dressing-room fitted up with every luxury that any lady could desire; and a small library where she could read, write, or study at will.

"Are these intended for me?" she asked, as she looked round; and then she stopped abruptly, with an innate conviction that the servants at Bralyn must not see how unaccustomed she was to such splendor.

Her surprise was increased when a pleasant-looking maid came smiling and bowing and told her that Lord Carlswood said she was to wait upon Mrs. Waldron.

Then, when the wardrobe doors were opened, she saw wondrous treasures of satin, silk, velvet, lace, dresses that had been sent from Paris, cashmere shawls, mantles of finest velvet.

There was also provided everything necessary in the way of gloves, fans, slippers—nothing had been forgotten. Ismay's face grew pale with wonder as she gazed at them.

"Shall I help you madam, to dress for dinner?" asked the smiling maid, and Ismay, with some little trepidation, consented.

The maid had selected a demi-toilette—a dress of rich blue velvet trimmed with white lace. She arranged the waving masses of light brown hair so as to show its silky abundance; she placed a white camellia in it; and then she opened a jewel-case that lay on the toilette-table. It contained a suite of pearls—a beautiful necklace, a bracelet, and earrings.

Ismay looked at herself when the toilette was complete, with a sense of wonder and fear.

Was that lovely, radiant, magnificently-dressed woman really Paul Waldron's wife? The white, graceful neck and exquisitely moulded shoulders were fair as the soft gleaming pearls, the rounded arms were perfect in shape, as were the little white hands, with their pink-tipped fingers the slender figure, the features of the glorious young face. She smiled to herself.

"I wish Paul could see me now," she thought; and then she reminded herself, "I must not forget to write to him."

She went down to the drawing-room, where Lord Carlswood and Mr. Ford awaited her.

They both looked up in wonder as the beautiful girl entered the room. The old lord paid her many courtly compliments, and the fair face flushed with triumph.

She went through the ordeal of dinner with great calmness and self-control. She was half dismayed at the splendor of the dining-room—at the silver, the rare wines, the flowers; the luxury that seemed to abound everywhere half startled her. But she was careful not to displease her grandfather—she watched what he did, and imitated him.

"Three months under the careful tuition of some accomplished and high-bred woman," thought Lord Carlswood, "will make her presentable anywhere."

After dinner, while he paused in his conversation, she looked up at him suddenly.

"I must not forget to write to Paul my husband," she said; "he will be waiting so anxiously for a letter from me."

Lord Carlswood waved his hand with a courtly gesture.

"Will you oblige me, Mrs. Waldron, while you honor me with your society by refraining from all mention of that person's name?"

Her face flushed with anger—some proud retort sprang to her lips; but prudence won the day—she made no reply.

After that Lord Carlswood was kinder to her than ever. He took her round the picture-gallery, he talked to her, he allowed her to see how greatly he admired her.

Without ostentation, without boasting, he gave her some faint idea of the glories of the house of Carlswood. He showed her ancient armor that had been worn by the heroes and warriors of his race; showed her the pictured faces of men whose voice had ruled the land; he showed her the portrait of ladies whose names had been proverbial for beauty and grace.

Ismay listened without comment. In her own mind she was comparing the magnificence of everything around her with the poverty of her little woodland home. Could she ever return and live contentedly there again? Lord Carlswood watched her in silence; he took heart from the expression of her face; he kept her purposely engaged in conversation.

"Let her forget to write to him during this first night of her absence," he said to himself, "and I shall consider it a point gained. It will teach him what to expect, for I begin to hope and to believe she will not leave me."

It was not until Ismay stood in her room at midnight that she said to herself—

"What shall I do? I have forgotten to write to Paul!"

CHAPTER VII.

A FEW days passed, and Ismay Waldron began to feel at home at Bralyn. She became accustomed to its splendors, to its magnificence, to the new and beautiful life that opened to her. She looked back with wonder on the time that had passed—on her life in the humble cottage. How had she borne the quiet, the seclusion, the absence of everything she now valued most?

Lord Carlswood was most adroit in his treatment of her. He said nothing that she could openly resent, but he lost no opportunity of airing his Conservative principles—of expressing his contempt for all Liberals, all Radicals. He was always inveighing against poverty, yet in a fashion that she could take no offence. The time came when so far from feeling in the least degree annoyed with him, she coincided with his every word; and when the Master of Bralyn found that was the case he sent for Mr. Ford.

"My grandchild will not leave me," said the old lord to his lawyer; "I am sure of it."

"May I ask why, Lord Carlswood."

"Because her master-passion is vanity she has more vanity than affection. I have known women—women of our own race too—who would have laughed all wealth to scorn, who would have given their lives for their love—women of noble nature, who would have trampled all luxury under foot. But Ismay is of a lighter nature. Her master-passion is vanity. She will stay with me, because I can administer to her vanity, and her husband cannot."

"It seems to me very like murder," said Mr. Ford, remembering the white haggard face of the young husband, "and I, my lord, should not like to change places with you, if you sin in this fashion."

"I will take all the risk," was the quiet reply.

Then the old lord began to tempt his grandchild. He talked to her of the great world, of its brilliant pleasures, its gaieties, its honors; he told her how such beauty as hers would command universal homage—that in London, even amidst the noblest ladies, she would be a queen. He tempted her with the most costly jewels, with the most magnificent dresses; he lavished every luxury upon her. He insisted that she should learn to ride, and purchased a beautiful Arab for her. She had the use of a luxurious carriage; she had servants to wait upon her.

He tempted her through her love of her son.

He would take the child in his arms and praise his noble face and his frank, engaging manner.

"It is pitiful to think of Lionel brought up in a cottage, with no higher hope than to be a respectable gamekeeper; nature meant him for a nobleman. Lionel, Lord Carlswood, would perhaps be the greatest man of his race."

He tempted her through her love of the beautiful. He surrounded her with everything that was most graceful and choice—he cultivated her taste—he spoke highly of her appreciation.

He tempted her through the innate refinement that had always distinguished her, he ministered to it in every way. He spoke always with the greatest contempt of poverty, of all approach to vulgarity; he spoke with most condescending pity of those whose position in life was inferior to his own.

He tempted her, too, by the wonderful reverence in which he held his race; he told her stories of the Carlswoods dead and gone—of the heroes, the statesmen, the warriors, the noble and beautiful women—the heroines of his race—women whose names were famed in song and story; and then, stopping abruptly, he would say, with strange pathetic earnestness—

"I could not bring dishonor on such a name!"

Day by day Ismay loved her new life more and more. It was so pleasant to wander in those splendid grounds, under the shade of ancestral trees; it was so pleasant to live in those magnificent rooms, with their thick soft carpets, their superb furniture, their rare pictures and profusion of flowers—to have servants to attend to her every wish—to have carriages, horses, jewels dresses, every luxury that her imagination could devise.

It was pleasant always to have a purse full of money—to know that she need never trouble about ways and means—to have respect, homage, flattery, reverence shown to her; it was pleasant to be surrounded by beautiful things—to meet none but polished and refined people.

She thought with a shudder of the little cottage, the one little maid, the homely life. She contrasted her husband, in his plain working dress, with the polished gentlemen she saw around her.

She was weak of soul, weak of purpose, weak of heart, weak of will. The past, with its poverty and privations, became hateful to her. She loved the present; she dreaded the thought of returning to her humble home, of giving up her jewels, of growing accustomed again to an obscure life. How she would miss the grandeur, the luxury, the magnificence of Bralyn!

Yet she loved Paul—loved him as dearly and deeply as her light nature would allow her to love. There were nights when her pillow was wet with tears—when she sobbed as though her heart would break—when she thought all the world well lost for him.

But with the morning sunshine those better thoughts would flee.

She never forgot her husband—when she saw anything especially beautiful, she would long for him.

She would take her little child out into the grounds, so that, unheard by others, she might talk to him of his father.

There was hardly an hour in which her heart did not turn to Paul; but she was vain, weak, fond of luxury, easily persuaded; and the love of self, the love of wealth and magnificence, was stronger than her love of him.

"I am in my right place now," she would say to herself; "I never felt at home in Paul's little cottage."

Then, when Lord Carlswood thought the love of present surroundings had taken deep root, he spoke to her.

He was calm, firm, and decided; he told her that nothing would ever induce him to recognize her husband, and he repeated his offer.

"I shall not seek to influence you," he said. "I simply lay both paths in life before you; you shall choose as you will. If you make up your mind to return and take your boy with you, so be it. I will not reproach you, but I shall never look upon your face again; nor—pardon me for speaking so plainly—shall I ever leave to you or Lionel one shilling of my money. Do not think I shall ever change. If, on the contrary, you decide to remain with me, I will make you heiress of all my fortune, and my estate shall go to your son. You shall have every advantage that I can offer you. I will find some lady accustomed to the usages of good society and the ways of the world to give you two or three months' instruction, and the next season you shall go London. You shall be mistress of Bralyn House, one of the most magnificent mansions in the metropolis. You shall be a queen, a leader of fashion. You shall live one of the most brilliant lives woman ever led. You shall have wealth in abundance, and your son—your beautiful boy—shall succeed to a large fortune."

Her face flushed as she listened, and then grew deadly pale.

"And what is the condition of all this?" she asked.

"That you give up your husband, who—but I need not tell you what he is—that you consent to live apart from him, and never to see him again."

"It is cruelly hard!" she murmured.

"Not so hard as you think," he rejoined. "Rank always has its penalties. How many queens have married for the good of their kingdom and have given up the man they really loved? How many noble ladies, at the call of duty, have married men whom they disliked? You are not required to suffer so; you have but to leave a man whose tastes, habits, and manners cannot fail to be disagreeable to you."

"I love my husband," she opposed.

"Certainly. Well, think it over, Ismay, and let me know the result."

She tried entreaties, expostulations, remonstrances, and prayers—it was all in vain.

The resolve he had formed he would not break.

She would go home, and never mind the poverty, the privations, or anything else.

Paul was worth any sacrifice; Paul loved her so dearly that nothing should induce her to stay away from him.

Then she pictured to herself with what infinite delight he would receive her—how he would love her, bless her for her truth, thank her for the sacrifice.

Her heart grew warm with love for him, her eyes grew dim with tears.

But she was vain and weak; love and vanity struggled hard for mastership, and vanity won the day.

She forgot the wooing among the green lanes of Ashburnham; she forgot her wifely duty, her plighted troth, her husband's love; she was careless of his suffering, heedless of his despair, when she told Lord Carlswood that she had thought the matter well over and had decided to stay.

His lordship sent for Mr. Ford, and Mr. Ford received instructions to write to Paul Waldron to him of Lord Carlswood's offer and of his wife's acceptance of it.

He wrote, picturing to himself the handsome, haggard face as he had seen it last.

"May Heaven pardon those who deliberately break a human heart!" he said as he finished the letter.

He had written very plainly, telling Paul what Lord Carlswood had decided to do, and that, although willing to adopt Ismay and her son, he steadfastly refused in any way to recognize his grandchild's husband.

"Your wife has had plenty of time to decide," he wrote, "and she declines to leave Bralyn."

By Lord Carlswood's wish Ismay enclosed a note.

"It will be a confirmation of Mr. Ford's letter," he said.

She wrote:

"I cannot expect you ever to forgive me, Paul, or to think as I think. I know how much you have loved me—and I have loved and do love you; still, for, my own sake and Leo's I think I ought to accept Lord Carlswood's offer. I wish that it had been different; I wish that you could share all our advantages. You may think that I ought to have refused and have returned to you, but I should never have been happy at Ashburnham again. The little home that contents you would not have contented me. It is better that I should tell you this frankly. I could not be happy with you again. You must not think me unkind. I always felt I was not in my right place. For all the love and care you have lavished upon me I thank you now in bidding you farewell."

So coldly, so heartlessly written; yet blurred and blotted with burning tears, without one word she placed the letter in Lord Carlswood's hand; but no one saw Ismay Waldron again that day.

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE came a bright, warm, sweet morning in August, when Paul Waldron rose early and went out amongst the dew-laden flowers, he had been thinking so intently about Ismay that he could not sleep.

It was a month since she had left him, and he was longing to look at her bright, beautiful face again.

"She could not be annoyed now," he said to himself, "if I wrote and asked her to come home; she had been gone so long."

He had almost forgotten his doubts.

Ismay had written to him very often, telling him of her great enjoyment; but she had never given him even the slightest hint of the struggle in her mind, never told him one word of Lord Carlswood's offer.

"I will write and ask her to come back;" and as he said the words the sun seemed to shine more brightly, the flowers to look more fair.

He sat enjoying the sunshine, the dew, and the flowers; the little maid took his cup of coffee out to him, and the postman, seeing him in the garden, brought the letters to him.

There was one bearing the postmark of Lynn.

An hour afterwards, when the little maid went in search of him, she found him lying on his face on the ground, cold and senseless as one dead.

She tried to rouse him, and after a time he looked around him with a dazed, bewildered air.

"Have you been ill?" asked the girl; and then she looked at him in surprise, for as he walked to the house he stumbled at every step.

He went to his room, and she heard him lock the door.

He was a strong man, brave to suffer and endure, but that letter had struck him down as a sudden and terrible blow would have done.

The news bewildered him; at first he could not realize it.

Slowly, clearly, the terrible truth came home to him.

Ismay had forsaken him for mere vanity, for wealth and luxury.

She had given him up and had left him forever.

When his mind had quite grasped that truth a terrible cry came from his lips—a cry to Heaven for vengeance.

Then, unable to bear up, he fell with his face on the ground.

When he recovered he sat for long hours in that room that was never again to be brightened by his wife's fair face, bearing the first pain of his agony in silence that was heroic.

Then hot anger, fierce indignation rose within him—anger so wild, so frantic, that he was for a time like a madman.

Who had taken his darling from him?

Who had tempted her and lured her away?

He stood with white lips and cursed the destroyer of his happiness with terrible curses.

He cursed the proud lord who had robbed him of his treasure.

"My darling!" he sobbed, and his great heart seemed breaking with its burden. "My darling—so beautiful, so tender, so loving, my wife!"

Then he remembered that it was of her own free will she had done it.

She had left him that she might enjoy wealth, luxury, and splendor.

She had left him, had blighted his life, had broken his heart, had slighted his love, for—money.

He had loved her with a passion that was almost terrible in its intensity; but, as he thought of what she had done, that love seemed to him to change into hate.

He did not curse her; but his lips curved with a curious smile.

"She was light and vain," he said. "She had my heart in her hands; she has broken it and thrown it away. She was not worth my love. For her sake I would have borne starvation; she with a few cool words gives me up for money. I will not curse her, but I cry to Heaven for vengeance."

He raised his right hand.

"I swear," he said, "by my love and my sorrow, that I will avenge my wrong—that I will take full vengeance on her for what she has made me suffer."

Paul Waldron's trouble changed and warped his whole nature; it hardened him as nothing else could have done.

Yet to no man living did he make any complaint.

He said nothing of what had happened; he went about his work for some days as usual, but with a grim, determined look on his face, and his voice seemed to have taken quite another tone.

He knew that there was legal redress for him: he could have claimed his child.

But he was too proud.

If she had voluntarily left him—let her go.

The law of the country might force his heartless wife to return—might compel her to come back to him; but he disdained any such assistance—he held the law in contempt.

"If she has left me of her own free will," he said to himself, "I will not take her back because the law is in my favor. Let her do as she will."

Nor would he write to appeal to her.

"She shall not know what I have suffered—she shall not laugh over my pain," he said to himself. "I will never write to her. She has left me, and she shall not know what becomes of me."

What he suffered—his desolation, anguish, despair—none but Heaven knew.

It changed the whole nature of the man—it hardened and embittered him—it made him unlike himself.

He brooded in sullen gloom over his wrongs, and then his gloom would give way to passionate anguish and despair.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Schoolmaster's Dream.

BY CLAY CORDERI.

THE shades of evening had been falling some time.

Every here and there the rays of evening lamps penetrated the deepening gloom as they shot through the windows of the farmhouses in the valley.

A light breeze sang in the leafless branches of the trees, and the new moon sailed up the eastern sky, attended by ten million twinkling stars.

There were few in this quiet valley who ever turned an eye on scenes like this with aught but careless glances.

Toil from early dawn till late at night left them little time or desire to view Nature's glories critically.

Yet there was one among them, though not of them, who had been viewing this coming night carefully.

He was the schoolmaster, who, for the last term, had been instructing the young of the neighborhood in the little schoolhouse on the hill.

Now the winter's work was over.

That day he had bade them farewell, and on the morrow he must leave, perhaps forever.

Therefore, it was with various emotions that he viewed the gathering darkness on this eve.

At last he wearied of the view, and turning from the window, seated himself by the fire and gave himself up to reverie.

The past winter's work passed before him and with it came numerous questions.

"Have I done my duty fully? Shall any of those I taught ever advance to places of distinction, and if so, will they thank me for my labor, or are they all destined to tread in the footsteps of their parents, never knowing anything but the hardest labors. Oh that I could see into the future!" he sighed.

With questions like these he wearied himself, and before he knew it he slept.

And, as he slept, the night seemed to have passed away.

The sun was shining beautifully in a cloudless sky.

The trees were covered with verdure, now of all the hues so beautifully blended by the early frosts.

The fields, too, evidenced a season passed, and all Nature bore the marks of time.

At first he thought the landscape one which he had never seen before, but gradually one old landmark after another came back to his memory and he recognised in it the neighborhood where he had taught his first term of school.

Many changes had taken place, not only in the country but in himself as well.

Youth had departed and old age had taken its place.

Scores of years had passed since he had left this valley.

At last, he had came back to visit this spot ever dear to him.

It was very slowly that he ascended the hill on which the old schoolhouse stood.

Many were the times his cane only kept him from falling prostrate, and often had he to pause and rest.

He reached the summit and the schoolhouse stood before him, changed, it is true, but it was still the same old house, despite the ravages of time and neglect.

He slowly approached it, for old memories and faces came up before him and overwhelmed him like an avalanche.

He lifted the latch and entered.

Here he expected to find a great change, but the room was little altered.

The old desks were still there and so was the stove.

A tattered map swung from one nail and the remnants of wreaths swung in silence.

The same ink marks adorned the ceiling and walls, and he almost persuaded himself that the same figures were yet on the board that he had left there so many years ago.

Everything was there as he had left it—all but the scholars.

He seated himself on the same bench he had sat on so often, and mechanically he took out the old report.

It was the same which he had used.

He turned over its leaves, and as he did so a change came over him.

His age passed away and he was once more young.

It was the hour for school.

The seats were filled with the same scholars which he had taught forty years ago.

He tapped his bell for silence, and taking up his pen began to call the roll.

The first was "John Smiley."

"Here!" came from one of the back desks, and behold! the school-room dissolved as if by magic, and a battlefield stood in its place.

A fierce conflict was in progress.

Might was almost victorious over right.

Unless succor came soon the day would be lost.

They had been fighting for hours.

Death had frightfully thinned their ranks, and fatigue was fast overpowering them.

Their lines were wavering, yet they stubbornly contested the ground, inch by inch.

This could not last long, still the reinforcements came not.

The battle grew more furious.

The assailants pressed on with shouts of victory, but at last relief was seen in the distance.

It comes thundering on.

It draws nearer and nearer.

The trend of their horses can be heard and the earth seems to tremble under their feet.

The sunshine is reflected from their glistening sabres and joyful shouts rend the air.

The lines open, and they rush on the foe.

The smoke hides them, but a voice is heard within the gloom to shout out the one word "Charge!"

Then comes the crash, but the master recognized the voice—it was John Smiley's.

He sees no more.

The scenes fades from his view, and the schoolroom and scholars take their place again.

He comes to the next name, and "James Raymond" resounds throughout the room.

"Here!" comes from a seat farther on.

Again the schoolroom gives place to a new scene.

The ocean seems to roll where it stood.

A dreadful storm is sweeping over its surface and lashing it to fury.

The waters boil and surge vehemently.

It is terrible.

"Woe be to the vessel caught in this maelstrom!" sighs the master.

But the words have hardly passed his lips, before a magnificent steamship appears in the distance.

Slowly she ploughs her way through the seething waters.

She had not escaped unscathed.

Her masts are gone, her smokestacks, too, and water can be seen pouring from gaping seams as her hull is raised above the sea on every wave.

A few wretched people are securely lashed to her deck, but in their faces there is no hope.

Despair and terror alone reign there, for every wave they expect will engulf them.

A hatchway opens for a moment, and there quickly emerges one whose face is a marked contrast to theirs.

Hope sets enthroned on his brow and determination flashes from his eye.

He takes in the situation at a glance, and cheering words and calm commands ring out above the storm.

The wretches regain courage and he is obeyed.

The deck is cleared, the leaks are stopped, and the vessel battles bravely on.

And, as the days and nights pass as in a panorama, his voice speaks words of praise and hope until the haven is reached.

Then it is silent, for his duty is done, and now he may rest, but not till two hundred people have showered blessings down upon him "the hero, James Raymond."

The scene is past, but only to be changed as he calls the name of "Paul Gestler."

"Here!" comes from a desk close beside him.

Tall mountains rear their heads on either side of the room.

A wide valley lies between them covered with the vegetation of a tropical clime.

The huts of the natives are scattered here and there, and in the distance is a village.

And, while he beholds the scene, the village seems to draw nearer; he looks down the street and he sees many people congregated, earnestly gazing and listening to the discourse of one who stands before them. His face is little less dark than their own, but the features are those of an European.

And, as he strongly appeals to the assembled people to follow the blessed Master, his voice betrays him, and a tear falls from the schoolmaster's eye as he whispers the name of "Paul Gestler, the missionary."

The scene fades.

Another name is called, a new scene appears, and so on down the whole list, until the boys are done.

Then he turns to the other page, and, more softly, perhaps, calls the name of "Annie Lee."

"Here!" answers a low, timid voice.

A large city lies before him.

The streets are filled with a hurrying people and the heavens are red with the flames of a great conflagration.

Houses are crumbling before the devouring giant, but all the people are saved at last, and a sigh of relief goes up from the multitude.

But a face appears at a window.

It is a wee face, the face of a little girl, so small that she can scarcely see over the sill.

She reaches out her little hands and cries for them to come and save her.

The people look on in terror.

The house is almost enveloped with flames, and a threatening wall stands toppling over the dwelling, ready to fall any instant and crush it to atoms.

It is a trying moment, and the bravest hearts quail as they look at the flames and threatening wall.

The little girl must die.

But no! not without one effort at least to save her.

One in that number dares to make the trial, and it is a woman.

She quickly throws aside her shawl, and with an audible "God help me!" breaks through the people, and is half way to the house before they divine her purpose.

Shouts of "Stop her! stop her!" are raised, and they try to prevent her advancing, but she eludes them all and disappears in the burning building, while the people without wait with breathless suspense her appearance.

She is seen for an instant at the window, and they breathe more freely.

But the wall now leans more and more.

Will it stand till she gets out?

The people's hearts fail them.

It is on the eve of falling, and the people fall back, but it pauses for an instant, as though gathering up its strength for the fearful plunge.

Yet she has not appeared.

It gives another lurch, another, it is gone! but she springs from the door with the child in her arms, and falls fainting beyond danger, and a voice shouts "Hurrah for Annie Lee!" and the cheers sound high above the roar of the flames.

Again the scene passes away and as one in a dream he calls the name of "Laura Fair!"

A city stands before him again, but there is no conflagration in progress.

He sees the poorest part, that in which is found the poverty and misery.

He looks into those miserable tenements, and sees the people—many almost starving for the necessaries of life, while others toss back and forth on their pallets of straw and call on God to release them from their suffering.

He sees the poor little pinched faces that have never heard a kind word or known a pleasure.

He sees the empty grate, and the mother wipe away the tears as she tries to warm her shivering babe against her aching breast.

He sees the swiftly-falling snow and almost hears the cold wind as it howls around the corners and down the cold streets.

He sees all the misery and suffering and his heart throbs in pity, for not a ray of comfort can he glean from the view.

But by-and-by a lady appears on the scene.

She is not elegantly dressed, but a sweet smile lights up her face in a way that renders irresistible.

At the sight of her the poor invalid brightens up, a glad smiles breaks over her countenance and she seems to forget all her pain.

The little pinched faces loose their gloomy look, the mother wipes her eyes and the little babe ceases to shiver, and laughs and plays as though the breezes of June were fanning its blue cheeks with their perfumed wings.

She seems to lighten all around her.

The rooms do not appear so dismal now she is there, neither does it appear so cold.

Her visits are short, but long after she leaves, the light of her presence seems to linger, and voices whisper the name of Laura Fair lovingly.

The scene dissolves, but the master's eyes have grown dim, he cannot see the next name, nor the next.

He skips several until he comes to one deeply underscored with black.

His hand stops here.

He pauses before calling that name, for she is no more.

Strange that she should be with them this day, but there she sits looking up at him in that beautiful way she always looked at him.

The same smile is on her lips and the same dimples in her cheeks which he had seen there the last day she sat there.

Involuntarily he said "May Ellis."

No encouraging "Here!" came this time.

The silence of the grave reigned.

The schoolroom remained before him for some moments, as though loth to disappear again, but a change came over it very slowly, but at last a new scene was in its place.

It was no battlefield this time, no raging ocean, no city's misery, nothing but a little room.

No costly carpet covered its floor, no expensive pictures adorned its walls, and no stately furniture invited you to enter and rest.

It was poorly furnished.

A few chairs, a little bed in the corner, a small stand and a few cheap prints hanging against the wall was all its furniture.

But it was now the scene of a sorrowful parting.

A young life was about ending, and the stricken family were assembled about that little bed, and sorrowfully watched that dear face, which would so soon be sealed in death.

With what deep sorrow that father gazes on the little wasted form, while the mother, choking back the sobs, strains it to her breast, as though, by so doing, she might be able to ward off the unwelcome messenger.

The brothers and sisters, too, are there, and as they gaze on the struggle, tears flow from their eyes like rain.

But their tears, the father's agony and the mother's anguish avail not.

The reaper comes steadily on and gathers the flower home.

Takes the darling of the family, the liveliest of the flock, the favorite of the school and leaves a void that never will be filled again forever.

With the first outburst of grief the scene changes.

Darkness settled over all things.

It deepened and deepened until the scene was entirely hid, and, strange, but it did not disappear! but stayed, clothing all thing with its impenetrable folds.

And as it lay a change came over the face of the master.

The pallor deepened until it was ghastly white. His head sunk lower and lower until it rested on the desk.

The pen fell from his fingers and rolled to the floor, and at last the roll call was over.

Now the darkness began to lift, and behold! the old schoolroom was unchanged, but the desks were filled, not with scholars, but the glorified spirits of those he had taught so long ago.

And as the darkness fully disappeared, they arose and with one accord raised their angelic voices in a song of glorious welcome.

Still singing they advanced to the master's desk and little May taking his hand, he arose as glorious as they, and joining in their song, they passed out of the door, just as the last rays of the setting sun, passing through the window, fell on the mortal form of the master now silent forever.

Bric-a-Brac.

A MINE SUPERSTITION.—There is a superstition among coal miners that if any one whistles in a mine some disaster is sure to follow. The theory is that whistling drives away the good luck spirit, leaving the miners to the mercy of spirits of evil. A whistler was lately mobbed in a Lackawanna mine.

YEAST AND BREAD.—From the time of Pliny, the naturalist, the Gauls employed yeast in the manufacture of bread; but in the seventeenth century the medical faculty condemned this practice as injurious, and from that time there broke out an open war between the physicians and bakers. This question is not yet entirely decided.

OLD HARRY.—The popular attributes of the evil one were a human form, with horns, tail, and a cloven foot. These are very probably derived from the Grecian fables, and from the representations of the Greek satyrs and Roman fauns—the gods of the mountains and groves; and it is also probable that "Old Harry" was originally "*Old Hairy*." The satyrs were said to have hair like goats. "Shock" is a head of rough hair—a rough-haired dog. So there is doubtless an affinity between "Old Harry" or "*Old Hairy*," and "Old Shock," the English name given to the demon supposed to haunt roadsides and old pathways. "The Lord Harry" may allude to the scriptural terms, "the god of the world," the prince of the powers of darkness.

THE MYSTERIOUS CANDLESTICK.—In the old cathedral at Ribe, Denmark, there is fastened to one of the massive granite pillars near the main entrance, an ugly brass candlestick upon which is inscribed a curse on the man who removes it. No one knows when or by whom it was put there, probably more than two centuries ago. When some years ago the church was repaired it was decided to remove the unsightly object. A ladder that was put up for the purpose fell upon one of the workmen and broke his leg. The first man who went up to unfasten the candlestick fell down and broke his neck. On the same day the architect who had the restoration of the church in charge fell seriously ill. The candlestick was then left in its place and remains there to-day, an object of awe.

"A DOZEN."—As the derivation from the French *douzaine* implies, it is generally presumed that a dozen implies twelve things but in the English potteries, and in the earthenware trade, queensware, and crockery, a dozen to this day represents that number of any special article which can be offered at a fixed price. That is, the price is fixed and the number to a dozen varies. For instance, the pitchers which are called "jugs" in the trade are sold as 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36 pieces to each dozen, the price for a dozen being constant. The ordinary pitcher, holding a quart, is a twelve or twelve to the dozen, while a pint pitcher is twenty-four to a dozen, and is so called when dealing in that size. Few of the articles of the trade are sold in dozens of twelve, plates being almost the only ones, and some of them are sold at sixty to the dozen.

MAYBE.

She leant across the stile
With her merry golden smile,
And her bonny brown eyes glancing
Through the green leaves all the while,
And he who loved her so
Watched from the path below;
But she tossed her head so daintily,
And laughed and bade him go,
Maybe! maybe! we cannot know;
Maybe! maybe! 'twas better so.

When the winds of March were loud,
And the skies were dark with cloud,
He had won her love forever,
And she trusted all he vowed,
But she wept against his heart,
"Oh, my darling, we must,
For a barrier lies between us
Forever more, sweetheart!"
Maybe, maybe, we cannot know;
Maybe! maybe! 'twas better so.

And the years have passed away,
And they both are old and gray,
But the same sweet dream is in their hearts
Forever and for aye,
Oh, sweet and sad the pain
Of the love that will not wane—
So sweet, so sweet because so true,
So sad because in vain,
Maybe! maybe! we cannot know;

STRANGERS STILL.

BY CLEMANTINE MONTAGU.

CHAPTER I.

"A SCOTCH MARRIAGE."

A JOLT, a swinging motion, and the line of cars lay on their sides in the midst of a desolate ice-bound stretch of Highland scenery; such as are uninjured of the frightened people, and worried officials, hurry to and fro helping those who have been less fortunate than themselves.

Soon the overturned cars are cleared, and it is ascertained that there is, happily, little damage done to life or limb; but one thing is certain, and that is that the passengers cannot resume their journey until morning.

Perplexed groups stand about discussing the accident, and wondering as to their abode for the night.

A young girl, handsomely dressed in rich furs, stands apart crying bitterly; she is shaken and scared by the accident; worse still, she is traveling alone, and does not know how or where to pass the night.

She shivers with cold, and gathers her costly wraps about her with trembling hands.

A conductor passes hurriedly; she calls to him faintly, but he does not hear, and she gives vent to a little disconsolate, impatient exclamation; a tall figure standing behind her in the dark hears it, and, hat in hand, comes forward, and, with courteous deference, asks if he can be of service?

"Oh! yes," says the lady, eagerly; "tell me, are many hurt, and what is to become of us all this bitter night? I'm cold, hungry, and frightened;" and the soft sweet voice trembles, for she is very young, and terribly scared at finding herself in so strange a predicament, utterly unprotected?

"We cannot continue our journey till morning, when a train will arrive to take us on; meanwhile, the night must be passed in shelter of some sort, for the cold is intense. Thank Heaven, there are but few injured, and they are being conveyed to a gentleman's mansion about a mile distant, where also many have gone to beg a night's lodging; too many, I fear, to be received comfortably. I hear there is a small town or village about four miles distant which boasts two inns, besides many respectable houses. I, in common with many of the robust passengers, propose walking there: meanwhile, the others go down the line to seek shelter at the last miserable station we passed. Might I presume to ask your plans?"

"Oh! I am alone; I have none, unless you will let me walk with you to the village; may I?"

"I shall esteem it an honor, madam, I assure you, if you will accept my escort. It is growing dark; we had better be starting; I see the man who has offered to be our guide is waiting," and holding out his hand to assist her over the debris, the gentleman led her to the group who were about to start on their unpleasant tramp through frozen lanes and valleys.

The cold was intense, and the way rough and dark, so that the two soon became friends, she clinging to him for help, and he cheering and encouraging her unceasingly.

After a long, weary walk, the lights gleamed through the darkness and mist; then their guide came to a halt, saying it was useless for all of them to go to one inn, so, after receiving his reward, he directed them to the separate inns and departed.

Our two travelers joined the lesser party, and toiled on through the ill-lighted streets, until they came to the house of entertainment.

As they entered, they found themselves the most distinguished of the tired group, and immediately singled out by the comely landlady for chief attention.

She showed them into a private room where a cheerful fire was burning; then she left them to return later for orders.

The lady sank exhausted upon the nearest chair, and the gentleman divesting himself of his wraps, says in a cheery, cultivated voice:

"This is cosy now; when we have had something to eat and drink, we shall feel quite comfortable."

He is a handsome young fellow of five and twenty, with a ruddy complexion and honest grey eyes; he looks at his companion admiringly.

She is a slim girl of seventeen, with a rich tinted dark face, and a wealth of dark wavy hair.

"Can we have some tea," she asks, "and plenty to eat? I'm so hungry."

While she spoke, she had been vainly trying to free her numbed fingers from their dainty coverings.

Her escort, seeing her fruitless endeavors, took the little hands in his and drew the gloves off tenderly.

Thus the landlady found them when, with a discreet little cough, she again inquired their wants.

"Some tea, brandy, and anything you can let us have to eat, and quickly," replied the young gentleman, smiling. "We are famished with hunger, and frozen with cold; and please reserve us a couple of beds, we cannot leave here till morning."

The landlady bustles away, sure of a profitable customer in the handsome gentleman, and the young couple are again alone, and the young gentleman passes to the lady his card, upon which is inscribed "Brundel Havesham, Inner Temple."

She receives it smiling, then, looking annoyed, exclaims in consternation, and clasping her pretty hands:

"Oh! dear, what shall I do? I have left my bag containing my purse and everything in the train, and have no card, money, ticket, or anything; whatever am I to do?"

"Don't let that trouble you," says Brundel, pleasantly. "I shall be happy to provide you with everything, and you will doubtless recover your bag to-morrow, and, if not, you will oblige me by allowing me to be your banker; but now tell me whom have I the honor of serving?"

"I am Cecil Rolfe; my uncle, Sir Sydney Rolfe, will thank you for your kindness to his ward, and repay you any expense you may incur in serving me."

"I have had the pleasure of meeting Sir Sydney at many of our masonic gatherings; we are members of the same lodge, and I esteem myself fortunate in serving anyone in whom he is interested. But here comes our long-desired repast—see that you do it justice—its savory odor is tempting."

During the meal the two young people became very cheerful and friendly; Brundel gazing admiringly on Cecil's glowing southern beauty, and she mentally classed him amongst the handsomest and most engaging gentlemen she had ever met.

Brundel, after producing a novel from his pocket for her perusal, left to see about their accommodation for the night, returning with the landlady bearing a glass of negus, which he persuaded Cecil to drink before retiring.

She then feeling greatly fatigued followed the landlady to her chamber, first bidding Brundel a friendly good night.

"We must breakfast at eight o'clock, to catch the train," he told her. "I trust you will rest well. I hope to get some sort of carriage to save us from that long walk back; but rest well, for fear I should be unable to procure one."

After his companion had gone, feeling bored by his own society, Brundel asked permission to join his host whom he had seen in the bar parlor playing cards, with a select circle of cronies around him; permission was readily granted, and Brundel soon diffused fresh spirit into the little party by his genial manner.

In a room above Cecil lay shivering in a large lavender-scented bed; she felt lonely and a little scared by her strange surroundings.

The feeble light of a tallow candle lighted the large bare room but dimly.

Standing opposite her own was another large bed, and between the two a strip of carpet; two rush-bottomed chairs and a table, with an old-fashioned cracked glass completed the meagre array of furniture.

She lay some time gazing about; then she bethought herself she had not locked the door, so, springing out of bed, she sought to do so, but to her consternation found no key there.

Opening the door a little way, she peeped out in the hope of seeing the landlady.

The light came up the broad staircase, gleamed on the oaken floor and the closed door of the room opposite her own, but no one was in sight.

She called out timidly, but her voice was drowned in the gay rich strains of a drinking song, which instinct told her was sung by her new friend Brundel.

She listened awhile to the gay tones, then crept back shivering to bed, telling herself it could not matter about the key, as she had nothing worth stealing, and no one would harm her; so she fell into the sweet sound sleep of youth, the last sound in her ears the music of Brundel's voice.

Down below the party was kept up late, and Brundel was the first to depart to his room, his head aflame with wine and excitement, which, added to the fatigue of the day, had mastered him.

At the top of the landing he pulled off his boots, and paused a moment, undecided which of the two doors to enter; one stood on the right, the other on the left of him.

Being rather unsteady on his legs, he elected to enter the nearest, that on the right: so he opened the door, and, in a few moments divested himself of his clothes and slipped comfortably into bed.

He awoke in the chill grey dawn with a headache, and a sense of extreme thirst.

For a moment, he could not imagine where he was; then slowly the events of the past day came back to his recollection.

"What a fool I was to drink so much," he commented to himself. "By Jove! what room have I got into? This is certainly not the room my landlady directed me to; that I understood, was a small room, and this is a large one, and by Heaven!" he said to himself, excitedly, "has another tenant in the opposite bed."

He raised himself upon his elbow, and looked in amazed silence upon the other bed and its fair occupant.

Surely never a fairer sight greeted a man's eyes.

One bare round arm and a pretty dimpled hand was thrown above the dark tumbled head and lovely glowing face.

Brundel lay back in consternation; he marvelled as to what he had better do.

And just as he had decided to rise, dress quickly, and leave before the bright eyes opened, shuffling steps sounded outside, and he heard his boots being picked up clumsily and then lumbering footsteps descended the stairs.

Cecil opened her eyes at the sound, saying to herself, "Is it time to get up, I wonder?"

She sat up in bed to reach out her hand for her watch, which lay on a chair near.

Brundel drew his head under the clothes, and pretended to snore.

Cecil yawned, stretched herself like a child; then, after rubbing her eyes, attracted by his breathing, looked towards the opposite bed.

A little scream of surprise and fright burst from her lips, as she noticed it was occupied; and her face grew very white, as she perceived, by the heap of clothing lying by the bed, that the occupant was a man; who she could not tell, for only the crown of Brundel's head was visible.

She sat, for a few moments, as though turned to stone; then, listening to the heavy regular breathing that so cleverly feigned slumber, crept cautiously from her bed, and, snatching up a heap of clothes, opened a large cupboard, and dressed herself by the door.

"Oh! if I can only get out of the room before he wakes," she murmured, as her trembling fingers bungled at her task.

When her garments were all on, she remembered that her boots and stockings were still lying between the two beds.

Shaking with nervous dread, she crept out and obtained them; then, with her boots in her hand to avoid noise, she made for the door.

Her hand was upon the clumsy wooden latch, when she heard footsteps ascending the stairs, so she waited impatiently for them to pass; but they staid outside the door, and she heard the landlady say, in a kind of stage whisper, to some one who was with her:

"Well, I never! if the gentleman hasn't gone into the wrong room; look, his door is open, and the bed just as I made it."

"'Taint no mistake, ma'am, depend on it, they're a runaway match, mark my words if they're not; and a handsome pair too; I for one wish 'em luck."

Brundel, hearing plainly their whispered remarks, decided it was best they should be confirmed in their delusion, so, with a sudden start, he opened his eyes, as though just awakened, and met the ashamed and crimson cheeks of Cecil's abashed face.

"You here, Miss Rolfe!" he exclaimed, in pretended amazement; "why, then, this must be your room which I, by some wretched blunder, entered last night; pray forgive me, and sit down while I contrive some way out of the dilemma; and, believe me, I am grieved beyond expression, at the unfortunate chain of events that have led to this embarrassing situation; but if you will be guided by my judgment, I hope to spare you all possible annoyance. You must agree to a little deception for the short time we are bound to remain here; to which, of course, you need attach no consequence. You heard that the landlady imagines us two fond but foolish young people who have, in the ardor of their attachment, eloped. Now, all we have to do is, for a while, to humor this delusion. In this you must assist me. Meanwhile, try to look at the droll side of the picture, for really the situation is comic; though, I confess, it is also vexing."

"Oh! it is wretched," exclaimed Cecil, clasping her hands before her face; then, withdrawing them, she looks for the first time at the handsome face before her, and says: "Tell me now, how are we to behave? Really, I can't face those people alone."

"No," he answers, "of course you can't. This is how we must manage; you go into that great cupboard over there, and wait while I dress; I'll see to everything. Try to look a little less reproachful; I know I deserve it, but it hurts."

Without another word or look, Cecil hides her diminished head in the cupboard, feeling very bashful and disturbed.

She is cold, too, and hungry, with the strong, healthy appetite of youth and chilly weather.

Presently a laughing voice calls her from her hiding, and she goes out with drooping head to Brundel, who bids her to sit down awhile.

Then he picks up her little mud-splashed boots from where she had dropped them in her fright, and calls lustily for the chambermaid.

A bonnie Scotch lassie comes grinning to his call, and he, with a nonchalance that surprised himself almost as much as it did Cecil, said, in a clear, loud voice:

"Please bring my wife a cup of coffee and some hot water, and get some one to brush these boots at once."

The girl, still grinning, goes on her errand, and Brundel, again closing the door, takes Cecil's passive hands in both of his, and, looking at her kindly, says:

"Poor little girl, how cold you are; pluck up heart of grace, and face that clothes-horse like a young woman with the haughty dignity of a British matron. I'll shield you from every harm, and in a couple of hours we shall be away from this queer old place, and shall have closed this blundering chapter of our lives forever. Now I'll go and forward breakfast."

Cecil lifted her great fawn-like eyes to his face in gratitude; and Brundel, going down the broad staircase thought:

"What glorious eyes! Dear little girl; this is a strange situation for her; please God it end well."

During breakfast, Cecil hardly dared lift her timid eyes to the amused face of her companion.

The meal passed over in silence, and both felt relieved when it was over.

Standing beside the fire together, this silence grew oppressive, and Brundel broke it by saying, as he looked at his watch:

"We must leave in half-an-hour; ah, here comes the venerable gig to convey us. Allow me to help you with your cloak."

When he had done so, seeing her trembling haste, he said:

"No need to hurry so; we had better wait here awhile than in the cold."

Then, taking her hand, and looking down into her flushing face, he said, very gently:

"I want you to look into my eyes, little girl, and tell me, before we leave here, that I am forgiven for the vexation I have unwittingly caused you. I also wish you in future to look upon me as your loyal and true friend—one to whom you will come in any hour of need. I can never fail you while I live. Accept this as a pledge of my sincerity, and, if you are in trouble, send it to me, and I will come if I am alive."

As he spoke, he drew from his fourth finger a plain gold gipsy-ring, with one large diamond set in its centre; and this he placed on her wedding-finger, saying:

"Let it stay there now, with the stone inward; it will assist you in your new *role*."

Then, putting his hand beneath her chin, he raised her sweet flushed face, and compelled her eyes to meet his.

He was shocked to see their brightness shaded by tears.

The sensitive mouth trembled, like a grieved child's, as she said:

"I do forgive you, and accept your vow of friendship."

"This seals the compact," he said, gravely, stooping his head, and pressing her lips in a long caress.

"Oh! how dare you, sir?" she cried, breaking from him, looking very flushed and handsome.

He smilingly answered:

"Forgive me; am I not your husband?"

Then he went to settle his somewhat heavy score with the landlord, who surprised him when, after receipting his account, he said, placing before him a book, such as one commonly sees in hotels for visitors' names:

"Please, sir, oblige me by writing yours and the lady's name down in my visitors' book; it is the custom of the house."

Brundel hesitated for a moment, and felt inclined to decline.

Then it struck him he had no reason for refusing, so he wrote his name in a bold, clear hand, and threw down the pen.

"Perhaps the lady will write her own name," suggested the man to Cecil, who had followed Brundel out.

Cecil complied readily, when Brundel, to her surprise, leant over her, and said, hurriedly:

"You forget you are married; you must sign, Cecil Havesham."

As both the landlord and his wife were watching her, she complied with a trembling hand, and eyes that had a look of fear.

"Your good lady looks pale, sir," said the landlady; "persuade her to have a glass of wine before she goes out into the cold."

"A good idea," said Brundel, gaily; "what will you have, lady-bird?"

"Port," she answered, in a faint, low voice.

She felt strangely upset, and hoped the wine would revive her.

"My wife will take port," said Brundel to the hostess; "and just serve mine host and me with a bottle of whiskey, in which the driver and yourself must join us, to drink good speed to my wife and I on our journey."

Cecil felt painfully embarrassed as one after the other pledged them in good, hearty fashion.

She smiled faintly at the driver's broad Scotch accent, and marvelled to see, at second of it how grave and pale Brundel had grown.

Their host and hostess were English, so their tongue did not raise the same awakening thought in Brundel's mind that the Highland tongue of the man did.

Brundel, under pretence of looking after the horse, went out into the air to hide his white face; then exclaimed to himself—

"Heavens! what have I done? The events of the morning have driven thought out of my head.

"We are in Scotland, therefore this marriage is legal, and I, madman that I am, have only just thought of it.

"A skinful of whiskey is a good thing, but in this case it has led to terribly bad results.

"One blessing, that poor little girl need not know into what a pit my folly has dragged her; and, for her own sake, she will keep this adventure a secret, and I—will, here goes to forget it;" and he turned, and gaily helped Cecil into the crazy gig.

During the journey, he rattled on in so lively a strain that Cecil forgot her fears, and was her own bright, welcome self again.

CHAPTER II.

"BRECHIN BRAES."

AFTER a cheery ride neath the keen, clear, blue sky, Brundel dismisses the driver and his venerable gig, and attends Cecil to the train, assisting her into a car, and seeing that she is provided with every comfort; he is about to say adieu and

seek another compartment, but the girl's look of undisguised surprise pricks his conscience, and he springs in, saying eagerly,

"Are you sure I have not already tired your patience too much? May I travel with you further?"

"Yes," she answers, to this last remark: "I am glad to have some one to travel with; I hate to be alone. I miss Cutler dreadfully."

"Who is Cutler?" asks Brundel.

"Oh! a dear good soul, who was my nurse and is my maid. I left her in Edinburgh; her only sister, living in Rutherglen, sent for her just as we were about to start, saying she was dying.

"Cutler was sorry to leave me, but assured me I could come in safety, and she would follow me to Brechin Braes when she had done her duty to her sister, to whom she is tenderly attached. Sir Sydney will meet me at Mrs. McKensie's."

"Are you really going to join Mrs. McKensie's winter gathering at Brechin Braes, Miss Rolfe?"

"Yes," replied Cecil; "do you know her?"

"I do indeed; she and her brother Dick are my oldest friends. I am bound for Brechin Braes myself, so you see our friendship is not, as yet, likely to become a thing 'in sweet memory folded.' I am truly glad, for now I can escort you to the very end of your journey;" and, as he spoke, Brundel held out his hand with a sudden impulse of friendly interest.

It was mid-day when they came to the end of their journey; through the heavy air a light shower of snow fell softly.

Walking briskly to and fro on the narrow wooden platform, a lady and gentleman, in handsome wraps, awaited the arrival of the train.

Brundel sprang out eagerly to greet them and then turned to assist Cecil, who was benumbed with cold, to alight.

"Here is another of your guests, Mrs. McKensie, whom I have had the honor of escorting part of the way."

"Why," said the tall, regal woman bending forward eagerly, "if it's not our Brownie. Why, child, how comes it that you are travelling unattended? Sir Sydney did not expect you for days.

"Where's Cutler? I hope you have, neither of you, suffered by that fearful accident?"

"It was really fearful," smiled Cecil; "and Cutler was obliged to leave me at Edinburgh, to go to her sister who is ill."

"Tell me all about it in the cars, dear," says Mrs. McKensie; "we shall freeze if we stay here another minute; come, boys, let's be leaving."

As she spoke she placed her dainty hand on Brundel's arm, as though it were her right, leaving Cecil to follow with Dick Bradford.

They all get into the car, and spend a pleasant half-hour in merry chat, before the splendid old mansion breaks upon their view.

"What a lovely place!" exclaimed Cecil; "you led me to imagine a dull old place, valuable only for its rich preserves."

"You would be less charmed with it, Cecil, if it had been to you a prison for the best part of your days."

"Surely," answered Cecil, gently, "it is early yet for Edith McKensie to speak of the best part of her days as a thing of the past.

"Perhaps you are right, child," says Edith, sadly; "at least I will try to believe so."

Edith is the first to alight and mount the steps, and very queenly and beautiful she looks, as with a gracious smile she stands to welcome them, a regal woman, in the full bloom of her beauty; an empress, to whom a man might bend, but whom a man could never rule.

She leads Cecil through the handsome hall, up the oaken staircase, where a trim maid awaits her orders.

She gave them with queenly grace.

"Tea, at once, in dressing-room; and seek from among the maids, for some one to assist Miss Rolfe until her own maid arrives."

They then pass into a pleasant fire-lit room half boudoir—half dressing-room. The handsomely appointed toilet-table glitters with glass and gold; on a couple of chairs, a dream of a dress waits to be donned by its owner.

The large low room has the scent of lavender and rose leaves, while, from the dark panelled walls, glinting mirrors and soft-tinted pictures brighten the scene. The room is upholstered in blue and gold, and when the servant turns on the light, it presents a charming, quaint, mellow-tinted scene.

The maid, with quick deft fingers, divests the ladies of their wraps, and they sit in low chairs by the cheerful fire, their feet deep buried in the fleecy rug, on which a noble greyhound reclines between them, looking from one face to the other often, as though he found them a goodly sight.

Then a sonsie Highland lassie, with eyes as grey and soft as her native mountain mists, comes with quiet steps and makes tea for them; and when this service is over, her mistress dismisses her, and the friends enjoy that thing so dear to women, a fireside chat and a cup of tea.

Edith, with jealous curiosity, questions Cecil about her journey, and her opinion of Brundel Havesham; but Cecil, though she appears to answer her companion's questions openly, really tells her little or nothing, for she feels sensitive about her adventure at the Inn and has decided to keep her secret close; thinking thus causes her to start guiltily, when Edith carelessly remarks—

"What a massive ring you are wearing, Brownie; a keepsake, I suppose; what a splendid rose diamond."

"Yes," replied Cecil, "it is handsome; a family relic of which I am rather proud."

She feels her face grow hot as she says this, for her nature is truthful and honest, and she springs up, glad to escape, at the sound of the dress-bell.

The same bright lass who served them with tea now waits to conduct Cecil to her apartment.

Cecil dressed with unusual care, and, when the last soft curl was fixed in place, and her white dress adjusted in graceful folds, the maid could not restrain a little exclamation of delight at the fair picture of warm-tinted girlish beauty.

Drawing her soft fleecy wraps about her, she ventures out into the long dim corridor and seeks her hostess who is buttoning her high gloves on her rounded arm as Cecil enters.

They make a striking picture, and Edith's fair, full-developed loveliness, heightened by her robe of pale-blue, contrasts pleasingly with Cecil's youthful beauty.

In an old-fashioned room with deep bay windows, the remainder of the guests await them.

They are a small but goodly company. Seated beside the fire is a pretty smooth-faced old lady, in a velvet robe, whose patient listening face and closed eyes speak her affliction. She is Mrs. Bradford, Edith's widowed mother, and she is blind.

Opposite to her is a well got-up, carefully-attired old beau with brown curling wig, smooth shaven face, and the most pearly of false teeth.

He is taking snuff from a gold jeweled snuff box with the air of a Chesterfield.

This is Sir Sydney Rolfe an old bachelor, Cecil's uncle and guardian.

He is thanking Brundel, with old-fashioned courtesy, for his care of his niece.

At a little distance is seen jolly Dick Bradford's florid face beaming with fun; he is talking to a plain, stylish, clever-looking girl whom he evidently finds amusing.

She is Ruth Romer, Mrs. McKensie's companion.

Close to them a shrewd deep-thinking little lawyer, who, seeming to carry his blue bag on his back, stands frowning darkly over a refractory glove.

Gazing at him with admiring affection is a flat freckled-faced woman of timid meek expression.

These are Mrs. McKensie's lawyer and friend, and the much-bullied wife of his bosom.

There is much hand-shaking at Cecil's entrance, which she does not seem greatly to relish.

She pecks at the rouged cheek of her uncle, then turns with relief to Mrs. Bradford, who is and esteemed friend, and whose patient face brightens up at the sound of Cecil's young voice.

They form a pleasant, merry dinner party that night.

Mrs. McKensie is a clever hostess, and chooses her guests so, that when together they mingle harmoniously, and she leads the conversation herself, with tact and wit.

She has been a widow three years. Her late husband, a man immensely rich, and much her senior, died in the hunting field, and left her at twenty years of age one of the wealthiest women in all the Highlands.

Before Edith became acquainted with her father's old college chum, Percy McKensie, she had been engaged to the chosen lover of her youth, Brundel Havesham, from whom she was separated for a considerable period by his acceptance of an official appointment abroad.

During his absence, an unfortunate misunderstanding arose between the lovers, and Edith's father died, leaving his family in great poverty.

Against her heart and judgment she allowed herself to be persuaded to marry the man who had rescued them out of a sea of debt and difficulty—Percy McKensie.

She was grateful to her husband, and esteemed him greatly in many things; but with the memory of that other love still living in her heart, she could not bring herself to more than tolerate her husband, for his was a jealous, exacting nature,—suspicious, too; so they clashed continually, though she strove to do her duty, and render him all a wife's devotion.

The sight of her poor blind mother's comfort and content, she felt, alone, recompensed her for the sacrifice she had made; but, at best, it was a wretched life, for what is harder to bear with honor than a loveless union?

Brundel hearing of Mr. Bradford's decease, hurried to England, full of repentance for allowing the break in their engagement to have so long existed.

All his joyous hopes were dashed from him suddenly as Samson was shorn of his strength, by the news of Edith's marriage. He could not bring himself to believe it; so resolved on a way to prove the truth by seeing her.

He arrived late one evening after a long ride, at a small estate of McKensie's by the sea, where they were staying to recruit.

Edith was horror struck to see him beneath her husband's roof; for, knowing of their previous engagement, he had conceived an insane jealousy and mistrust of Brundel, as ridiculous as it was unjust.

Edith was dressed for dinner when he arrived; she bade him lead his horse under the shelter of the rocks, where she could rejoin him, as her husband might return at any moment, and cause a wretched scene that would arouse a scandal against her fair fame.

Brundel obeyed, too dazed to care what he did.

She followed him with only a light scarf as covering to her bare head and shoulders. Their grounds reached to the brow of the cliff where the road branched off down a steep path to the sands.

The interview was a terribly painful one to both, for their love was hopeless and lasting.

They lingered longer than they imagined and were rudely aroused to their position by the soft sound of hoofs at a little distance on the sands.

There was no means of retreat, and Edith felt it would be embarrassing to be seen in full dress in a lonely spot.

As the horsemen neared them, to her intense dismay she recognized her husband and a guest of theirs, who had been to a neighboring town, and were now returning by the most pleasant route, the sands.

Edith clung to Brundel in a passion of dread, exclaiming in a tone of horror, for she feared a scene of violence—"Brundel, for Heaven's sake hide me from my husband!"

But she spoke too late, even were it possible to hide on such a barren spot, for the brilliant sheen of her costly robe attracted the horsemen's attention, and they were upon them.

Then followed a scene, the shame and horror of which brought a flush to Edith's face when her thoughts returned to it, to her dying day.

Fancy all the violent rage of a jealous husband at finding his loved and trusted wife affording a discarded lover audience in his absence, alone in so lonely a spot.

In that last interview with her lost love, died out all Edith's chance of future peace and happiness.

Her husband's aroused mistrust bore bitter fruit, even after the wretched marriage-tie was severed by death; for, in cruel revenge, Mr. McKensie left a will that bound his widow to bear his name till death, or forfeit all she most valued—wealth, comfort for her blind mother, affluence for her friends, and, worst of all, the custody of her child.

He had often told her no other sheep should fatten in his fold—no one should take his place with her; and he kept his word, out of hate of his supposed rival, more than in anger with his wife.

"The dead have no right to bind the living," she murmured, after the will was read; a will that gave her so much wealth, but fettered her with the cruel condition that she remained unmarried or forfeited all.

Such is the hard, jealous love of age for youth; the frost of December blighting the promise of May.

Edith knew she could never throw off the fetters that harsh will had cast about her liberty, for she came of a poor English family, many of whom were dependent on her beauty.

She never felt her gilded yoke so galling as she did when she again met Brundel Havesham.

Her heart went out in answer to his love; yet she crushed it back with an iron will, and told him she could never be more to him than a dear friend who could give him her barren love.

In vain he pleaded, sued, and tortured her with reproach and passion; she was firm, it was like water breaking against a rock.

At last she showed him her true position, and he saw his love was hopeless—for, much as he loved this woman, he knew her nature, her love of wealth and power; and, were she to throw these aside and accept him, what had he to give in exchange, but his honest heart and four hundred a-year?

They were both of the worldly, so they accepted the situation, under protest, it is true, but accepted it as irrevocable and secretly vowed constancy to each other, and nursed their love till it grew a bitter-sweet passion that made them both suspicious and wretched.

Mrs. McKensie had long been one of Sir Sydney's hopeless loves.

The old beau amused her, and as he was an old friend of her husband's, she permitted his devotion and accepted his friendship; and she became very fond of his winsome little ward, who had been sent, four years old, from her parents in India, to be educated in England.

They died soon after, and Sir Sydney adopted the child, adding to her already large fortune by the promise of his own son. She was to be brought out in the following season, and to the beautiful Mrs. McKensie was deputed the delicate task of introducing her into society.

So matters stand when our story opens, and the unfortunate complication of the Scotch marriage occurs.

The ladies adjourn to the withdrawing-room, a large, handsomely furnished apartment.

They form themselves into groups, to chat, and await the coming of the gentlemen, who do not sit long over their wine. The lawyers relates a witty story, well; Sir Sydney, a racy one, ill; the young men discuss field sports and walnuts with zest, and wonder why a chum of theirs, Jessie Rolfe, has not returned.

Jessie Rolfe is next-of-kin to Sir Sydney, and is not greatly esteemed by that gentleman, but, outwardly they are good friends enough, and there is a talk of mating the title and money by marrying the future baronet to bonnie Cecil,—a notion which has not yet been broached to that young lady, who cherishes a profound dislike to her handsome, dissipated cousin.

The sound of a rich contralto voice calls the gentlemen from their wine, and they proceed to the drawing-room, laughing and chatting merrily.

Their voices are quickly hushed by their admiration, for Cecil is seated at the piano, and her clear voice is heard singing, "Should he upbraid."

Seeing how greatly her audience had increased, she rose at the end of the song, and received their thanks with a blushing confusion, fair to see.

Her beauty struck Brundel as a fresh discovery, each time he looked upon her, noting some new grace; but his liege lady's clear eyes quickly led him to her side, to forget everything but hopeless love, and the intense pleasure of each other's society.

CHAPTER III.

"UNDER THE MISTLETOE BOUGH."

CHRISTMAS tide is fast approaching, and grand preparations are being made at Brechin Braes, to welcome it. New guests have arrived, among them is Jessie Rolfe and his lady mother.

He is a fine, good-looking fellow, with a handsome, but crafty and somewhat cruel, face.

His mother is a stately dame of sixty, of proud, overbearing disposition. Cecil shrinks from her strangely, considering how greatly this cold, proud woman unbends to her, and seeks to win her confidence; but confidence, like all God-given attributes, grows of its own strength alone.

"I cannot like aunt Hester," Cecil observed one day, to Edith.

"That is unfortunate, for when you lose Sir Sydney she will be your natural and legal guardian, unless, of course, you marry before that time, which, should you meet Prince Charming, I should advise you to do, and quickly, for I also mistrust your aunt, and Sir Sydney is an old man who grows more feeble each day, though he does carry his years so jauntily."

"Neither do I like cousin Jessie," continued Cecil; "and I am sure the way he appropriates me is annoying in the extreme. I have given both uncle and him to understand I will never, under any circumstance be persuaded to marry him."

The tears stood in her eyes as she said this, clasping and unclasping her hands nervously the while.

Edith soothed her with all the power of her womanly tact and sympathy, for the bright little lassie was very dear to her.

"Come," said Edith, "crying will spoil your looks to-night, and cannot alter the fact of your possessing some too affectionate relations.

"Cheer up, pet, I'll talk to Sir Sydney about the matter before he leaves, and prevail upon him to leave you in my charge instead of stern aunt Hester's."

Then they fell to talking about the ball that was to be given that night, and the dresses they were to wear.

With restored good spirits they joined the remainder of the party in the picture-gallery, where tea was being served, every other apartment being more or less disarranged by the preparations for the evening's entertainment.

They were a merry party, and the chief figure among them, moving gaily, sipping sweets from every flower, was the gallant old baronet, Sir Sidney.

Now with the grace of Beau Nash, he bent his glossy wig over some simpering dame, whispering, with great relish, some spicy story; now handing a dainty cup of tea to some fair damsel, with the courtesy of a Chesterfield; or exchanging remarks, with an air of intense wisdom and importance, with some of the gentlemen present.

Every action, every word, was characterised by a transparent childish vanity; such a vanity as once rendered kind-hearted Oliver Goldsmith at once the pet and butt of the literary club.

Cecil made her way to her uncle's side, and smiling her sweetest, said, "Get me some tea, uncle, then sit down and rest, or you will be too tired to dance to night."

"I too tired? You jest, Cecil; I feel as fresh as a daisy, and as strong as a horse. Now look into my face and tell me truly, do you perceive any sign of jaded spirit, or fatigued strength?

"Of course you don't. I know I am looking well, the ladies' bright eyes have told me so; 'tis only my silly little girl whose affection has jaundiced her understanding. Why, 'twas but this morning the worthy Benson assured me I was gaining flesh; in fact, my dear, that fairly frightened me; fancy your sprightly uncle's youthful gaiety weighed down by too great a load of flesh. Bah! it's a night-marish idea.

"I must try Banting. But now, little lady, good bye; I will go and consult Benson about a becoming button-hole flower. Here comes your cousin, he will attend and esquire you, as it was at one time agreed."

And, bowing with the air of a Sir Charles Grandison, the old man tottered from the spot followed by the severe, contemptuous glance of his sister-in-law.

In the hall, Sir Sydney met his valet, and was assisted to his room.

Cecil sat with flushed face and flashing eyes, under the full battery of her cousin's fierce love-making.

Brundel, at a short distance, watched the little by-play with amusement.

He admired the girl's lively spirit and power of retort, and pitied her a little, as he knew her cousin to be a blackguard.

Presently, seeing he was disengaged, and looking at her pitifully, Cecil called him to her with a flash of her dark eyes.

Brundel came to her side with easy familiarity, and was not to be stared from his place by her cousin's dark looks, or Mrs. Rolfe's scornful notice.

Cecil's brightened looks thanked him gratefully as he lingered by her side with happy nonchalance.

"He liked this little girl," he to himself. "She was so natural, so friendly, and so very lovely; besides, there was a bond of good will between them, born of their little secret, and he intended to guard her from that unworthy cousin of hers who was so bent upon winning her.

"Of course, his great love for Edith forbade anything but friendship. How she would storm," he thought, "in her jealous, exacting fashion, if she knew of their little adventure."

Then he fell to pondering deeply over it, and determined to point out, on good authority, how that mock marriage would legally affect their entering into any other marriage contract.

He had never given the matter any very serious thought, yet his professional knowledge told him it might prove an unpleasant matter of either of them chose to make it public.

His grave meditations were disturbed strangely enough by a discussion on the very subject of his thoughts.

On a distant seat lawyer Brownlow is holding forth in a loud voice on the law of Scotch marriage.

Most of the guests present being English folks, knew nothing of the subject.

The discussion had been started by a gushing young lady, who had been delighted by the matter, as portrayed in a romance she had been reading, and she now asked the lawyer's professional opinion, saying—

"Tell me what really constitutes a Scotch marriage?"

Cecil and Brundel both eagerly waited for the old lawyer's reply, which he gave in these words—

"My dear young lady, there's nothing more simple in the world; by our Scotch law a man has only to acknowledge a woman his wife before two witness and they are legally wedded.

"It is a lax law, and one that will, before many years pass, be very properly amended."

As he finished speaking there was a crash, and Cecil, for the first time in her life, fell down in a dead faint.

Brundel bent, with a white face, and gathering her up in his strong arms, carried her to a distant couch, where, opening a window the frosty air blew on her dead-like face. Many of the ladies came forward in surprised alarm, but Brundel bade them keep away, leaving her to the care of her aunt Hester, who, with cold compassion, set about sensibly to restore the girl to consciousness.

"What could have caused you to faint; child? said aunt Hester, when, at last, with a shuddering sigh, Cecil opened her eyes.

"I don't know," she answered wildly; "perhaps it was the heat of the fire to my back.

"Let me go to my room, please, I shall soon recover when I am alone and quiet. Oh! here is Janet, she will assist me;" and leaning on the maid's strong arm, Cecil, accompanied by Edith, left the gallery, followed by Brundel's regretful eyes.

"Poor child," he sighed, "I fear this little affair of ours threatens to turn troublesome; yet, how else could I have saved her good name?

"By Jove! what a fool I must have been to have thought so lightly of the matter; just as if I had not worry enough, without this vexatious episode in my life.

"What would Edie say if she but knew? But that she never must; her loyal heart must be spared that pain."

The ball that night was a very brilliant spectacle.

Out of all the lovely women present, Edith and Cecil shone out as stars; very beautiful Edith looked in pale blue shimmering satin and diamonds, and Cecil's gipsy beauty flashed out gloriously in an amber cloud that seemed to hold matches of golden sunshine in its rich soft folds. Cecil's eyes, lips, cheeks, were glowing with bright young life, the excitement of the scene deadening the pain of the day's discovery.

Without knowing it, all the wealth of her brave young heart had gone out to do honor to its lord.

With a girl's fresh true love she loved Brundel, the man to whom she was married but not mated.

She felt he did not care for her as she cared for him; but youth is ever sanguine and she looked forward with hope to her future.

Her face flushed hotly beneath Brundel's admiring gaze, as she stood before asking for her first waltz.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FATHER AND SON.—Some months ago, while a Russian nobleman and his son were at dinner, a squadron of mounted gendarmerie surrounded the house. The father, surprised at the unwonted tramping of horses' hoofs went to the window, followed by his son. No sooner had the latter perceived the soldiers than he fell on his knees exclaiming, "Father, kill me. I am a Nihilist. These soldiers are come to arrest me; if you love me, save me from the hangman's hands." The father, after assuring himself that escape was impossible, took his revolver, and shot his son through the heart. The officer in command and three soldiers burst into the room before the smoke had cleared away, but their intended prisoner was a corpse. This unhappy father has just been tried in Moscow, and acquitted by the jury.

A MISSIONARY ORATOR stood on a Sydney platform. Before him was a large audience, which included many daintily-mannered ladies. He had to describe the "costoms" of certain savages, and, of course, everybody wanted to know how the darkies dressed. And this is how he put it. "They had," he said, "only a single article of attire, and that was a fig-leaf, which was still on its native tree, a quarter of a mile off." Having thus adroitly disposed of his difficulty, he passed on to more congenial topics.

LOVE IN ABSENCE.

BY J. M. W.

'Midst all the turmoil of the busy day,
And in the peaceful stillness of the night
Recurs thy dear fond name; where'er I pray
Yearn I to see thy loving face so bright.
Could I but gaze into thy violet eyes,
And hear again the music of thy voice,
Dulcet and clear as Sabbath even's chimes,
Dear one, 'twould make me happy and rejoice.
Ever I'm yearning thy fair face to see,
Sad and lonely the hours whilst absent from thee.

A SHADOWED LOVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOCTOR WESTWOOD'S SECRET," "MARJORIE'S TRIALS," "HEARTS AND CORONETS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.—[CONTINUED.]

"IT is all right," Clara Wilmer, very voluble and excited, was saying to her husband; "we had made a mistake altogether."

"What, another mistake?" exclaimed the Vicar.

"Well—about Mr. Armstrong. Estelle has never wavered; she has always been true to Mr. Mervyn; and he has behaved splendidly.

"I understand it all now. Whilst all that dreadful affair was unexplained, he would not claim her promise.

"He left her free—he was too noble and generous to appeal to her—he waited for this day.

"Of course he has written to her—that is how she has been the first to hear it, no doubt.

"You told me once to wait for the end. And it has ended happily, after all! How could we have expected it? Everything looked so dark at first. And now it is so bright." So Clara explained matters.

"Hum!" responded John reflectively. "And young Armstrong?"

"Oh, as for that," answered Clara, after a short discomfited pause, "men get over these things! Perhaps it was only a flirtation, after all. And, in any case, it is his own fault. Estelle——"

"It strikes me he has had some encouragement," remarked the Vicar.

"He is Mr. Mervyn's friend. You remember how he spoke up for him at Beechwood that night; Estelle must have liked him for his championship," said Clara. "She was grateful to him; that was all."

"And he thought that gratitude, like pity, was akin to love, I dare say," observed the Vicar.

"He ought to have known," said Clara decidedly.

"So ought the moth to know that the flame will burn," answered her husband. "For my part, I am sorry for the young fellow."

Whilst all this had been going on at the Rectory, Lieutenant Armstrong, closely buttoned up to the chin, had been bravely breasting the worst fury of the savage northeaster, on his way back to Southwinton, caring little for the bitter blast or blinding sleet, so warm was the heart which beat high beneath his stout ulster.

Although he was "not a conceited fellow," as he constantly reminded himself, hope swelled triumphantly within him. He was really getting on with her; she had been so gracious to him all through that blissful evening, she had smiled on him, she had sung with him, she had looked so transcendently lovely, she—she—— Geordie hardly knew how to sum up the intangible "trifles light as air" which are yet "confirmation strong" of a woman's favor.

"Surely," said he, "a girl must know what a fellow means when he—he worships the ground she treads upon?

"And she'd hardly draw him on if she meant to throw him over afterwards.

"Miss Verney, at all events, wouldn't. That girl is good and true; I'd stake my life upon it!" concluded Geordie, stepping out gully in the very teeth of the wind, and laughing at its swinging buffet, although it made him stagger as he laughed.

"If this wind lasts, we shall have some sleighing.

"I'll telgraph up to Woodford for the buffalo rugs I brought from Canada, and have the wheels taken off the dog-cart phaeton; perhaps I may get Mrs. Wilmer"—doubtfully—"or the parson to do propriety and that sort of thing.

"Or Lady Drummond might; she's awfully good-natured. If she would only think of asking Feena!"

CHAPTER XX.

GEORDIE, Geordie, my poor dear ostrich boy, haven't you been hiding your head in the bush and thinking I couldn't see you? And haven't I found you out? Don't attempt to deny it. It's written all over your letter from the first sentence. 'My dear Feena,' to the signature—not so bold and self-confident as usual, dear—'Your affectionate brother, Geordie.'

"You are in love. You have taken the complaint in an exceedingly virulent form. You quote poetry; you have grown sentimental—you, Geordie. You mistrust yourself; you are depressed; you admit moonlit walks; you have developed a taste for solitude.

"Who is it? That is what my sisterly sympathy and my womanly curiosity are asking all day long. There isn't a sentence in any of your letters to indicate. I have read the whole batch over carefully to see. It can't be Lady Drummond, although I admit that she is what our American cousins would call 'lovely through and through.'

"A lady of her age, however charming she may be as hostess, mother, and woman, is hardly calculated to inspire a first passion of the rabid kind which has overtaken my poor brother.

"And for the rest of the neighborhood described in your epistles—the 'lumpy Squires at the Manor House, the 'half-dozen garrison hacks,' the 'pretty, but rather bread-and-butter girls' at the Rectory, the Commandant's 'blue' daughters—I know your horror of girl-graduates—none of those will do, Geordie. Besides, my experience tells me that not the girls you do speak of but the one you don't, would be the real thing.

"Who is it? Make a clean breast of it. You will feel better afterwards. Take me into your confidence, and I'll help you if I can—if I like her, and if—— No, I'll help you in any case—only tell me; for I am dying to know.

"I'm so relieved that it isn't Christie," Feena Armstrong laid down her pen at this point, to remark to her sister Janet, "that I feel as if I could welcome any sister-in-law short of a Hottentot Venus."

"I should prefer Christie to a stranger," said Janet cautiously.

"But think of the wide range of possibilities in a stranger," rejoined Feena.

"We know the worst in Christie—there is no hope there. But a stranger—there is infinite promise in her."

"You were always so hard on Christie," said Janet.

"Not harder than Christie has been on me," rejoined Feena quickly, in a tone of such concentrated bitterness that Janet, not usually observant, looked up at her, startled.

"What is it, Feena?" she asked anxiously. "What has Christie done to make you speak like that? It must be something very bad."

"What does it matter?" said Feena in a different tone, but bending over her letter so that Janet did not see her face. "Call it a girl's quarrel, or an unreasonable antipathy on my part, a sort of 'I do not like thee, Doctor Fell.' What does it matter?"

"Only that it makes you unjust, dear," answered Janet.

"Does it?" asked Feena carelessly.

"Yes. I know you would be sorry for that," said Janet; "but I sometimes think that this feeling about Christie tells in other things. It—it makes you bitter and hard, dear; it has altered you in some way that puzzles and worries me."

Feena said nothing for some minutes; her pen only moved quickly over her paper, and her face was turned away from Janet.

Presently, she rose to ring the bell; and as she passed behind her sister, she suddenly put both arms round her neck and laid her cheek against hers; and after Feena had gone back to her place, Janet, wondering, brushed away a warm tear left upon her plump white neck.

And it came to slow-minded Janet dimly that there was something more under all this than had hitherto been dreampt of in her philosophy.

Sunny-tempered Feena, the life and brightness of the Woodford household, had caught a strain of cynicism which jarred like a false note in the old pleasant harmony of her nature.

Whence did it come? Janet, pained and puzzled, had only just wakened up to question.

"Christie sails to-morrow," said Janet presently, after a sufficiently long pause. "She has gained her point, and she seems very happy; she is a devoted woman. I wish you could"—with a wistful look at her sister—"appreciate her, Feena. Just think of what she is doing. She is giving up everything to go out and nurse the wounded in the hospital at Mirzapore. She has been chosen as one of the six sisters to be sent at once. Did you see her letter? She writes as delightedly as if she were making the most delightful pleasure trip.

"Think of the dreadful sights she will see," cried tender-hearted Janet, shuddering—"the suffering and death! And, oh" —with an anti-climax which made Feena smile—"the horrible sea-sickness! I couldn't do it. It is beautiful of Christie."

Feena shut her lips very tight, perhaps to keep in something she might have said; and Janet, whose tactics were always of the most transparent kind, continued her labor of trying to drag the mountain to Mahomet.

"Papa and mamma will go to Gravesend to see her off to-morrow. So shall I: you will come too, Feena?"

"No, I think not," answered Feena, without raising her head.

"You shall take her my best wishes for her prosperous voyage, Janet. That will do as well—better, in fact."

"I wish you would come," pleaded Janet, "for your own sake Feena."

"I can't," Feena answered; "I am not good at pretending, Janet. I cannot offer homage at the shrine of Saint Christal. I am an infidel; I don't believe in your divinity. I—— There, Janet dear—we won't discuss her any further; let us talk of something else—Geordie, for instance. The dear old fellow! How delighted he is at Mr. Mervyn's success in India—Captain Mervyn, we must say I suppose. Geordie is so generous. It must make him feel being out of it all more than ever too.

"Fancy! If mamma had had more of the Roman matron about her, Geordie might have distinguished himself and been a V. C. too, instead of staying at home ignominiously and falling in love.

"How proud we should have been! Soldiers oughtn't to have mothers; it's a mistake of nature. Mamma always reminds me of the hen who mothered a duckling: she is so frightened when he takes to the water.

"It's very good of him not to swim away out of her reach. Oh," cried Feena, clasping her hands with a long sigh of irrepressible longing, "I wish—I wish I were a duckling—I mean a man, that I might swim away to the other end of the world!"

"Feena," exclaimed Janet, dropping her book with a start which was absolutely tragic, "is it—is it Mr. Mervyn?"

"Is who—what? What on earth do you mean?" exclaimed Feena.

"It suddenly struck me," said Janet, hesitating now, "that you—that it might be because of Mr. Mervyn."

"Perhaps it is," answered Feena composedly.

"Oh, that would be worse than Christie! You, Feena! Although he has distinguished himself and got the Victoria Cross, and all that—at least, he will have the Victoria Cross, they say—yet, remember, Feena, it has never been proved that he did not kill his father.

"The *Piccadilly Times* speaks of it only this morning!" exclaimed Janet, with tears in her eyes.

"The *Piccadilly Times* is a wretch!" cried Feena hotly. "Cannot we all see that a man who could be so heroic, so self-sacrificing, so—so splendid, could not be a cowardly murderer? They are made of different stuff—murderers, I mean."

"Then it is so!" exclaimed Janet tearfully.

"What is so?" asked Feena distractedly. "I declare we have got so mixed up with Christie and Mr. Mervyn and—and—murderers that I don't know what you mean, Janet! If you mean that I have any especial interest in vindicating Mr. Mervyn, you are the most blundering, blind, idiotic old darling in the world!" concluded Feena, suddenly dropping her indignant tone and breaking into amused laughter. "What could possibly have put such an absurd idea into your head?"

"I don't know," confessed Janet, breathing more freely again as she picked up her book. "I thought it accounted for—— for——"

"Don't try to account for anything," said Feena quickly, stopping her mouth with a kiss—"not even for Christie's voyage and the noble self-sacrifice—isn't that what the papers call it?—which expatriates our devoted cousin. But I forgot; we agreed to leave that subject; and it is nearly post-time and my letter is only half finished. Don't speak to me again for ten minutes, please."

Presently she folded her letter to Geordie and thrust it into its envelope. Then, with a sudden impulse, she opened it again and dashed off a postscript.

"Tell me how Lady Drummond is looking. Has the death of her husband altered her in mind, manner, or looks? I want to hear all about her. Remember me affectionately to her at the first opportunity.

"FEENA."

As she refolded her letter, her eyes fell on the sentence—"My experience tells me that not the girls you do speak of, but the one you don't, would be the real thing." Feena crimsoned painfully as she read, glancing nervously at Janet as she hastily closed her envelope.

* * * * * *

"That little monkey Feena is as sharp as a needle," said Lieutenant Geordie admiringly as he read her letter.

"Now how in the dickens has she guessed? By Jove, she is the cleverest girl I know! I wish I had her here; she might put me up to a wrinkle or two; for I declare I feel as small as Master Tim himself and as stupid as an owl when I am with her. I thought I knew something about girls too—having sisters and all that—and I never expected to be afraid of one; but I am no better than a stammering idiot when I get the chance to speak to her, and I am miserable till I do get the chance. 'The time is out of joint,' as somebody says.

"I'm out of joint; everything's out of joint. I've laughed at other fellows and chaffed them, and now it's my turn, I suppose—and serve me right, I dare say. I'd no idea it was such a serious matter. I envy that small monkey Tim the way that he rattles on with her.

"I wish I could get Feena down. If Lady Drummond would ask her! There was something about visiting one another when they were all together at Bellagio last year. They were awfully chummy, I know—kissing and all that sort of thing. It might occur to Lady Drummond if I gave Feena's message. And little Fee would come like a shot, I know. I'll try it on. Girls can always get at each other, and Fee, would know if I've a chance. The parsoness has her eye on Drummond"—jealously—"that's as plain as a pike-staff. But I don't think she cares for Drummond"—reassuringly. "She certainly preferred my conversation to his yesterday. I'm not a conceited fellow," said Geordie, "but she hardly listened to Drummond's hunting adventure, and she was quite interested in my history of old Mervyn and that fellow of his.

"By-the-way, the mail ought to be in. I wonder what Mervyn is doing? There will be full particulars of that affair this time. I'll just go round and see if there is any news.

"Mervyn may have written himself."

On his way to the post-office Mr. Armstrong saw a sight which quickened his pulse and his footsteps at the same moment.

A very unpretending little basket-carriage drawn by a short sturdy cob, which was driven by one of the two ladies occupying the low-seated vehicle, was passing slowly down the High Street of the country town. The usual shopping basket, already half

filled with small heterogeneous parcels, denoted the business which had brought the ladies from Hawarden.

Geordie, coming up behind the carriage just as it halted in front of the principal draper's shop, congratulated himself that he was in luck.

"Now this is the last place, excepting the post-office," Mrs. Wilmer was saying as she stepped out briskly. "Take the reins, Estelle; I shall not be more than ten minutes."

Ten minutes *tete-a-tete* with the "saint of his deepest devotion"! Geordie was hardly conscious of the coldness of Clara's greeting; he was so entirely occupied with this blissful prospect.

Mrs. Wilmer turned on the threshold of Hunt and Colman's, hesitated imperceptibly, was recalled by the expectant attitude of one of Hunt and Colman's young men, who was holding open the door, and finally committed herself to the flannelly odors of the interior of the shop, determining that her ten minutes should be as much curtailed as possible, and that Lilian's winter frocks and Tim's new knicker-bockers should wait for another opportunity.

Ten minutes! Why, it could hardly have been five, poor defrauded Geordie thought, when Mrs. Wilmer reappeared, preceded by a shopman bearing a brown-paper parcel.

"Now the post-office!"

Clara's tone was as severe as if she had said, "Now the block and the executioner!"

"Allow me," said Geordie, handing her in. "I am on my way to the post-office too. Can I inquire for your letter?"

"No, thank you," answered Clara shortly; "I must go in. I have a post-office order to get."

The next moment she saw her error, and could have bitten her own tongue with vexation.

If she left the carriage to get her order, she gave Mr. Armstrong another opportunity; if she employed Estelle on the errand, they would still be together. It was like the story of the fox and the goose and the corn.

Clara, having a keen sense of humor, could have laughed at her own dilemma, but she was so savage.

She whipped up the pony, bowed stiffly to the young officer, and the vehicle went clattering down the street, leaving him behind.

But Geordie knew of short cuts impracticable to the pony-carriage, and he was sufficiently awake to the Vicaress' motives to enjoy circumventing her.

He was at the door of the post-office, ready to hand her out, and with his own letters in his hand, when Clara drew up, grim and cross at the sight of him.

"Is the creature ubiquitous," exclaimed she petulantly to herself as she threw the reins to Estelle, "or is he only aggravating?"

He was so imperturbably polite and attentive, in spite of her snubbing, that she thawed a little at last, and permitted him to spread the fur rug over her knees—it was astonishing how much arrangement it required on Estelle's side!—and only froze up again when he bade them both good-bye, with an allusion to impending at Beechwood Manor, when he supposed they should meet again.

The meeting had so far upset his equilibrium that he forgot his mail letters, still unread, in his pocket.

Coming back from one of the long solitary country rambles he had affected of late just in time for mess, he was surprised at the general tone of excitement pervading the assembled officers.

"What do you think of the news, Drummond?" exclaimed Colonel Martin. "Most extraordinary, by George!"

"What is it?" demanded Geordie, trying to look as cool and unconcerned as possible. At the moment he could think of no other news than the possible announcement of Miss Verney's engagement to Sir Wilfrid Drummond.

That was the anticipation which had enlivened his walk just now.

"Do you mean to say you haven't heard?" exclaimed the Colonel. "Why, we expected you to be in possession of full particulars from private information! Hasn't Mervyn written?"

"Mervyn?" repeated Geordie, looking puzzled. "Have they given him the V.C.?"

"My dear fellow, you are a long way behind! You haven't heard that the old General's murderer has turned up?"

"No!" cried Geordie, jumping up excitedly. "Who is it?"

"His own servant—Vaughan—the fellow who gave evidence at the inquest, whom Mervyn brought out of the skirmish the other day. He has confessed it on his death bed."

"You don't mean to say so? Hurrah!" shouted Geordie. "Excuse me a minute. I had letters to-day; I haven't read them yet. I'll fetch them now."

"Yes, it's all true," he announced, coming back presently. "Here's a letter from Mathers, the chaplain, and a copy of Vaughan's statement.

"Mathers took it down from his own lips. Colonel Anstruther of the —th and two doctors sign as witness.

"It must be true. Poor Mervyn is down with fever; he was wounded in that affair, and Vaughan's confession was too much for him.

"I have heard him say the fellow was worth his weight in gold—wouldn't part with him for the world. Only in his last letter he was speaking of him and congratulating himself on having taken him out with him."

"What could have been the man's motive?" wondered the Colonel.

"Here it is," said Geordie, glancing at the letter in his hand—"sudden impulse—the old General was in a deuce of a temper. He had bullied and goaded the fellow until he was almost mad.

"Irish blood—capable of devoted attachment—the kind of expiation he had set himself, to serve Mervyn. A remarkable history!"

"Yes," after a pause, assented the Colonel a just and merciful man as well as brave and honorable soldier. "Death, and such a death, was the best and most fitting sequel to the story."

"I must telegraph to my father," Armstrong said. "It will astonish him. 'Pon my soul, I can hardly believe it now! Vaughan! I can remember the man's manner before the Coroner. It was as natural and as innocent as possible."

"I remember," remarked another officer, "being particularly impressed by a sort of candid honesty about the fellow; he was even indulgent to his master's beastly temper. Struck me as being attentive to the family, and all that. Curious!"

"Mervyn's luck has all come in a lump," said Armstrong, as he rose from table. "They'll give him his company, certainly—if not another step.

"Poor old boy! I hope he isn't very bad. He had hardly got over that other illness when he went out; and it may go hard with him."

Then Geordie took his way to the telegraph-office; and as he went he remembered something in Feena's letter which had faded out before the pressure of other interests.

"Christie!" he exclaimed, with a little aroused twinkle in his eyes. "She will come on the scene at the right moment. It is like a three-volume novel.

"Everything fits in right—for them," concluded Geordie, with a big sigh and an envious emphasis on the pronoun.

"I'll ride over to the Rectory to-morrow afternoon," he decided presently, recovering his spirits, "and tell her the sequel of the story.

"By Jove, it's more than fiction, as the papers say.

"And she is awfully interested in it all, and will like to hear the denouement. It has come sooner than any of us could have looked for."

CHAPTER XXI.

A BRIGHT, crisp frosty day, glittering with diamond lights, sounding its joyous reveille to dead-and-asleep nature—a day to set young pulses dancing to the time of its joyous music, and to rouse the most sluggish blood to keener, quicker flow; the lake at Beechwood dotted over with groups, skimmering, like bright-plumaged birds, over its glassy surface; that muscular Christian, the Vicar, executing wonderful figures and performing prodigies of skill and dexterity; Master Tim ambitiously endeavoring to follow in his father's footsteps; Clara Wilmer in the centre of her brood enjoying the gay scene and the keen crisp air; and Geordie Armstrong holding Estelle's wheeled chair against all comers and hailing the slight accident of her sprained ankle as a special dispensation in his own favor.

"The moth persists in singeing his wings," the Vicar remarked once to his wife, as he pounced down like a hawk, amongst her little ones and carried off little Lilian, screaming and fluttering with delight, in his strong arms.

The poor moth's short-lived day was nearly over.

"And you actually know old Mervyn? How was it I didn't take that in before?" he was saying to Estelle.

"Where did you say you met him? In Paris? Oh, danced with him, and that sort of thing? So often as we have spoken of him, and I never, until this moment, had the least idea you had even that slight sort of acquaintance! I must have been awfully stupid not to have understood. I'm glad you know him.

"He and I have always been like brothers," concluded the young man, innocently rejoicing in this little link of mutual interest.

"Feena, Feena?" to his sister. "Miss Verney knows Mervyn. Met him in Paris, it seems."

"Really!" called Feena, balancing herself in the attitude of a flying Mercury. "How awfully interesting! Why, Miss Verney, how did it happen that you and Geordie never compared notes on that most attractive of all subjects to my brother? He must have been unusually merciful to you."

"On the contrary, I have bored Miss Verney horribly, I am afraid," contradicted Geordie.

"It did not bore me," Miss Verney said, with, as Feena thought, a little effort.

"Oh, don't encourage him on that subject pray!" cried Feena, lifting her hands in a deprecating manner. "Geordie knows no discretion on the Mervyn topic. Are you not afraid to keep still, Miss Verney? Isn't it a glorious day?"

She darted off, zigzagging and curving over the ice like a swallow, as graceful and almost as rapid, and Sir Wilfrid, who had hung upon her footsteps, followed in a swift race.

Lady Drummond fondly believed that it was by a happy inspiration of her own that Feena had been added to the number of the Christmas guests at Beechwood.

"I should like to ask those nice girls we liked so much at Cadenabbia, you know, Wilfrid, she had said, when she was making out her list. "Young Armstrong will be glad to have them here too. And I shall like to see more of them and of Sir James and Lady Armstrong."

"Just as you like, mother," Sir Wilfrid answered indifferently.

"Our list of girls is rather limited," Lady Drummond explained, half apologetically. "And I think you got on well with the Armstrong party, Wilfrid?"

"I always leave all this sort of thing to you," her son answered, hardly lifting his eyes from the letter he was writing.

Lady Drummond felt disappointed.

"I thought," she began hesitatingly, "when we were speaking of them the other day, you seemed to wish it, Wilfrid—at least, I had the impression——"

"I do wish it, mother if you do; we are always of one mind—you and I," he added lightly, stopping to kiss her sweet troubled face as he passed her on his way from the room.

Lady Drummond was not satisfied. She folded her letter with a dubious hand.

"I really thought Wilfred was more than usually attentive to them," she mused. "He is so little susceptible to that kind of influence in general. I wonder when his day will come and how?"

The "daughters of Heth" were very apt to trouble Lady Drummond's peace. She was a timid tactician, and easily discouraged. Old Lady Bingham had said to her—

"The thing is in your own hands, my dear. You can marry your sons much more easily than you can marry your daughters. I married all mine. How? Why, I brought the girls I chose for them to the house and kept the others away! Propinquity, my dear—that is the secret, propinquity. And in a country house, with picnics and lawn-tennis and the billiard-room, and riding and the gardens and Tennyson and stuff—why, it arranges itself! You have only to lay the train."

Poor lady Drummond had made her first essay in laying the train—after the confident dowager—and apparently it had missed fire at starting.

But she posted her letter all the same. Geordie, hearing of it, sent an urgent seconder. Feena, at first flatly refused to accept the invitation; Janet had a previous engagement, and Sir James was laid up with gout, so that Lady Armstrong could not leave him.

"Geordie will be so disappointed," urged Lady Armstrong appealingly to Feena; "you see he counts so much on your going."

Then Feena gave in reluctantly; and Geordie, delighted, went up to London and brought her down, pouring out all his confidences by the way. Feena was as interested and as sympathetic as he could wish, and yet there was a change which Geordie was not slow to perceive.

"Feena is as quiet as a mouse; and, but that it would be too good a joke, I should say that she was putting side on here," he said to himself, with amused wonder, at the end of the first day. "Little Fee dignified! What a joke! And what is up with her now?"

But Feena thawed at the weather rose and on this skating morning she was her own bright piquant self, flashing hither and thither like a brilliant little fire-fly or a bright-hued humming bird. Estelle, from her warm nest of furs, looked admiringly after the picturesque little figure in the short skating-costume of dark-green cloth, bordered with fur and picked out with a knot or two of glowing pomegranate color, harmonising so well with the sparkling dark eyes and rich-toned gipsy complexion.

"How very pretty she is!" she said half involuntarily.

"Who is? I beg your pardon," asked Geordie, waking up out of a reverie.

"Your sister—Miss Armstrong."

"What, Feena? Do you think so?"—surprised, and with a very brotherly estimate of his sister's attractions.

"I think she is charming," Estelle said warmly.

"She is so full of life and spirit, so—so"—half enviously—"happy."

"Yes; she is happy enough. Why should she be anything else?" cried the undiscriminating brother.

"Feena is as happy as the day is long. She always was one of the jolliest, merriest little girls. Woodford would be awfully slow without Feena. She and I were always the chums of the family. Janet is slow and lazy—the best-tempered girl in the world—Janet, but she was never up to anything, from taking a bird's nest to riding to hounds. It was always Feena who was ready you know."

"Janet is a—your——" hesitating spoke Estelle.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

VIBRATIONS OF WIRES.—Some interesting facts are on the Impression produced upon animals by the resonance of the vibrations of telegraph wires. It is found that the black and green wood-peckers, for example, which hunt for insects in the bark and in the heart of decaying trees, often peck inside the circular hole made transversely through telegraph posts, generally near the top. The phenomenon is attributed to the resonance produced in the post by the vibration of the wire, which the bird mistakes as the result of the operations of worms and insects in the interior of the post. Everyone knows the fondness of bears for honey. It has been noticed that in mountainous districts they seem to mistake the vibratory sound of the telegraph wires for the grateful humming of bees, and, rushing to the post, look about for the hive. Not finding it on the post, they scatter the stones at its base which help to support it, and, disappointed in their search, give the post a parting pat with their paw, thus showing their determination at least to kill any bees that might be about it. Indisputable traces of bears about prostrate posts and scattered stones prove that this really happens

Scientific and Useful.

TRANSPARANT SOAPS.—Cut into thin shavings half a cake of Windsor soap, put it into a phial, fill the bottle with spirits of wine, and place it near the fire until the soap is melted. This mixture put into a mould to cool gives transparent soap.

NIGHT LIGHTS.—The common practice of having night lights in the bedrooms of children of well-to-do parents is deprecated by a prominent physcian. He says that it has a most injurious effect upon the nervous system of young children. "Instead of the perfect rest the optic nerves ought to have, and which nature provides for by the darkness of the night, these nerves are perpetually stimulated, and, of course, the brain and the rest of the nervous system suffer. Children thus brought up are excessively timid for years after on going into the dark."

PRESERVATIVE WRAPTING PAPER.—Two new kinds of preservative paper have lately come into commerce in Europe. One is produced by dipping soft paper in a bath of salicylic acid and then drying. The bath is prepared by mixing a strong solution of the acid in alcohol with much water. The other paper, meant to preserve from moths and mildew, consists of so-called Manila packing paper, dipped in a bath and dried over heated rollers. The bath is formed of seventy parts spirit of tar, five parts raw carbolic acid (containing about a half of phenol), twenty parts coal tar at 163° F., and five parts refined petroleum.

A CHEAP BINDING.—A correspondent of *The Scientific American* says: "I have bound about twenty volumes in this way: Pack the papers smoothly; hold firmly, and drive a thin chisel through the pile about half an inch from the back. Push strong tape through and leave out about two inches; put three or four tapers through at even intervals. Cut common thick paper boards large enough to project a little every where except that one edge must come front of the tapes. Draw the tapes tightly and glue down to the boards outside. Skive a piece of leather—common sheepskin will answer—wide enough to cover the back and come on the boards an inch or two, and long enough to project a couple of inches at the end. Paste the leather well, put it on the back; fold the ends in so as to come over the boards on each side. Paste any fancy or plain paper over the sides; and, lastly, paste the blank leaf down to the cover inside, and you have a presentable book and very durable.

Farm and Garden.

FUCHSIAS.—Fuchsias may be trained into any desired shape if taken in time. Take the little upright plants, pinch out the centre, and in place of one there will spring out two, often three shoots. Let these branches make about the same growth, and repeat the process to each, keeping the side branches of equal length of tapering like a pyramid, or by clipping off all the lower limbs and letting the upper ones droop over you have an umbrella.

FERTILIZERS.—When plants are in a growing state they may be stimulated by the use of guano water. A small teaspoonful of Peruvian guano dissolved in a pailful of rain water is strong enough; water the soil with this once, or at most twice a week. The Water of Ammonia (Hartshorn) of the shops is about as good, and can be had everywhere. If of ordinary strength add a fourth of an ounce (two teaspoonfuls), to a gallon of water, and use as above stated.

HOUSE PLANTS.—The importance of securing thorough ventilation for plants during cold weather should not be overlooked, and yet all undue exposure must be avoided. The leaving of the sashes or window open for a half hour when the temperature is too low will chill and injure the tender plants. There will very likely be trouble with insects. Tobacco water sprinkled on kills the green fly, washing with water drives away the red spider, the mealy bug must be picked off with a stick or the fingers. Worms in the pots are removed by turning out the ball of earth, when they may be easily seen.

EVERGREENS.—Some people turn their evergreens as they would box-edging, reminding the spectator of the old-fashioned Dutch topiary work. Don't do it too thoroughly. Judicious trimming answers a much better purpose, and is performed by pinching out the main terminal bud on all the leading branches of the pines, spruces, and firs, just as they are commencing to grow. Cypresses and kindred genera may have their strongest shoots clipped away, while such formal growers as the Irish yew and Irish juniper will admit of a general clipping all round. On the whole, it is far safer to prune too little than too much.

PATENT MANGER.—A man has invented a feed manger for horses, which is so arranged that one or one hundred horses may be fed automatically at any hour. By placing the horse's morning feed in the manger at night, it will be opened by clockwork, at any hour desired. The clock is so arranged that when the weight has run down to a certain point it releases a heavy beam, which dropping, pulls a pin which releases the manger, so that the horse can get at his feed. When the manger drops, by a cord withdrawing a pin, its weight releases the next one, and so an indefinite number of feed boxes may be made to follow each other like a tumbling row of bricks.

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SATURDAY EVENING, FEB. 4, 1882.

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"STRANGERS STILL."

It is some time since we have had the pleasure of presenting to our readers a story by Clementine Montagu, the authoress of the "Nemesis of Love," and other popular series. In this issue we begin one from her pen under the title, "Strangers Still." We can commend it as in every way equal to her other works in power and interest.

USE IS SECOND NATURE.

There is an astonishing power in human nature to conform itself to circumstances. We can become habituated to almost any sort of diet, and after a while begin to thrive on the strangest kind of food. A man who has lost one of his limbs or his sight, or his hearing, soon gets accustomed to it, and manages in some way to supply the deficiency. Chronic invalids get used to lying in bed and doing nothing, and even come to be more or less unconscious of pain, if it is of a steady, persistent nature, and does not rack the body.

Other creatures besides man have the same gift of adapting themselves to circumstances, in a limited degree. How is it that the dog, who is second cousin to the wolf, can be willing to become the servitor of man, and run and fetch for him, and take his food from him, and follow his footsteps, and, if need be, even die for his master? How is it that the descendant of the wild steed of the desert could ever be reduced to the menial position of a poor street-car horse, stumbling over rough stones, with a whip over his head, and a heavy load of human beings dragging behind? They get used to it—that is all you can say.

Even the vegetable creation, to some extent, bends to the power of circumstances. A tree, transplanted from the close protection of the wood to the open lawn, where the sun beats upon it unchecked, and the winds toss it about at their pleasure, gradually conforms to its changed condition, and strikes its roots farther and deeper into the soil, and braces itself to bear the new strain to which it is subjected, as best it may. The willow, that craves the water courses, if it is taken away from the stream and placed in some other region, searches about underground for the springs and the rivulets, and so manages in some way to thrive. It is true that the oak cannot accommodate itself to a flower-pot, neither could a very great man adapt himself to the condition of a boot-black.

There is a limit to both vegetable and animal endurance, and there are some things to which neither a tree, or a beast, or a man can get used. Nothing can get used to being abused.

It is easier to seek the inevitable than it is to submit patiently to a calamity that might have been avoided. To grow old in the course of nature is not hard to bear, but to become prematurely old as the result of irregular habits, or of disease, brings with it a peculiar bitterness. To become poor by unavoidable circumstances is more endurable than it is to lose your all by the treachery of a friend, by your own folly and carelessness.

It is a bad sign when a man gets used to certain things which he ought not to be willing to tolerate. When one becomes indifferent to his own shame he is past redemption. When foul words become so habitual to his lips that he does not know how offensive he makes himself to all decent people, his unconsciousness of evil shows how low he has fallen. There are some things which it was never intended we should "get used to."

SANCTUM CHAT.

IN Constantinople the slave trade is more and more openly carried on. A man sold his two daughters not long ago. Slave dealers keep a large assortment of young women on hand. The government never interfere with the trade or any of its attendant abominations, except when some poor wretch runs away.

—

FOR years an old buck, the leader of the deer herd on the Boston Common, has maintained an absolute and malicious tyranny over the younger members of his own sex. His treatment rankled, and the other day when he shed his horns they made a combined attack on him, which only ceased upon the death of the tyrant. The superintendent and his assistants attempted to interfere, but were driven out of the enclosure by the infuriated animals, who became docile again when their enemy was disposed of. They still preserve, however, a sort of rebellious air, and thus far not one of them has laid claim to the primacy.

—

A REMARKABLE use is being made of potatoes. The clean peeled tuber is macerated in a solution of sulphuric acid. The result is dried between sheets of blotting paper, and then pressed. Of this all manner of small articles are made, from combs to collars, and even billiard-balls, for which the hard, brilliantly white material is well fitted.

—

THE census returns just given in Bombay are quite interesting. Asked to state their profession or calling, the simple Hindoos have filled up the paper with an accuracy that might in vain be sought for in any other country. In Bombay there are, upon their own confession, twenty-six gamblers and swindlers, one dog poisoner, sixteen wizards, and 698 tattooers.

—

UNDER the title of "The Yellow Ribbon Society," the "Old Maids"—they prefer that name—of Syracuse have formed an organization "for the good of the community and the social enjoyment of the members." They are going to open the season with a ball shortly, and are ready to give long odds that it will be the most successful entertainment of the year.

—

OF the English Salvation Army, in a recent speech, the General declared that the army had grown from humble beginnings to an extensive organization, for the purposes of its work spent $60,000 annually on the hire of buildings. They entirely employed 445 officers, held 4,300 services weekly, had 12,000 soldiers ready to speak at any time, accommodating 178,000 persons in their buildings, and talked to 8,000,000 people on the streets weekly.

—

ACCORDING to a German economist, the income of the world is $18,520,000,000; debt, $10,026,000,000; taxes, $3,002,000,000; capital, $85,013,000,000. Sweden has the smallest debt, or $50,000,000; France the largest, or $3,140,000,000. The United States has the largest income, and England the most capital. Italy is the heaviest taxed, paying thirty-five per cent. of its income for taxes to the average fifteen per cent. of other nations.

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THE hotel and stable-keepers of St. Albans, Vt., have beaten the temperance crusaders. Their persistent determination to do no business so long as the prohibitory law was enforced has been such a source of pecuniary loss, inconvenience and public discontent, and has involved such passionate wrangles in the community, that the temperance workers have finally concluded that the moral gain is hardly worth the commercial and social sacrifice.

—

THE Rev. George O. Barnes is conducting, in Louisville, a religious revival which in most respects is not uncommon; but he introduces a novelty by carrying a bottle of oil as he goes among the penitents and anointing them on their foreheads. He claims Scriptural authority for this ceremony. Although very harshly criticized for his oddities, he is said to be decidedly sincere in his work—so sincere that he will take no pay except food and lodging—and his converts are numerous. He is a seceder from the Presbyterians.

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THE once powerful Swiss soldiery of the Papal States are now reduced to about 90 men. The Swiss Guard acted as the household brigade of Leo XIII, at the great ceremony of the 8th of December. Order was preserved on that day by the Papal police or Gendarmerie, about one hundred in number, and by the Palatine Guards. This latter regiment is now the largest body of troops in the Papal service. It consists of 800 men, all of whom are volunteers, who receive no pay, only their uniform being provided at the expense of the Vatican. They are nearly all citizens of Rome.

—

SERIOUS apprehension, if not actual dismay, has been caused among the proprietors of vineyards in Western Switzerland, by the increasing use and production of fabricated wines. The manufacturers cannot be prosecuted, for they sell their product for what it is—a combination of the elements found by analysis in pure wine. Ninety per cent. of their mixture is water, which costs them nothing, and of course they can undersell producers of the genuine fruit of the vine, while consumers of low grade wines would about as soon drink one liquid as the other, even if they were able to distinguish between them. It is apparent that the problem thus presented for solution is a serious one, from the fact that the prosperity of several cantons is largely based upon the success of viticulture.

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THE rapid destruction of the cedars of Lebanon has been made so apparent that the government has undertaken to preserve those which are left, and has constructed a wall around them. The trees will be accessible to all travelers who desire to visit them, but the erection of tents in the enclosure will not be permitted. No fire will be allowed near the cedars, and the stoves and cooking apparatus of tourists must be used only outside the wall. The observance of this precaution is shown to be important from the fact that a short time ago three of the largest cedars were burned, and in part destroyed, by the carelessness of the servants of travelers. The cutting-off of any portion of the trees is prohibited.

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THE method proposed in France for heating railway cars—namely, by the use of acetate of soda in the foot-warmers, seems to have proved very satisfactory on some of the French lines. As is well known, the substance thus employed has considerable latent heat; dissolved at a certain temperature, it absorbs a large quantity of heat, which becomes sensible during crystallization in cooling. All that is required is to fill the ordinary cases with a sufficient quantity of the acetate, close them, and place them in a stove at about 100°. The cooling of a case thus charged and heated takes twelve to fifteen hours. The warmers thereafter are taken from the compartment and placed in a stove—where the crystals of soda acetate are re-dissolved—and are then ready for fresh use.

—

SIXTY CENTS invested in whisky in the year 1869 cost Fannin county, Texas, in time and money more than the revenue arising from the whisky traffic for five years amounted to. We speak of the investment made by one Dean. He shot Dan Coulter, and poor Dan passed into the spirit land. Then the McDonalds shot and killed Dean. For this offense they were arrested, and after continuing the case several times were tried and convicted of manslaughter, and sentenced to the penitentiary. While in jail they were rescued by their friends breaking open the jail and liberating them. Taking it altogether, this sixty cents worth of whisky killed two men, made one widow, caused two men to be incarcerated and kept in jail at an enormous expense to Fannin county, and caused trouble to the families and friends of those two men, and then the expense of witnesses and trials in court, with loss of time to the sheriff and posse, put Fannin county to an expense of not less than $10,000, and that is just about the usual per cent. whisky pays, and generally pays it in the same way.

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THE remarkable types of Nihilist women are well known. Vera Sassulitch, whose shot inaugurated terrorism, was the most modest of her sex. In the court-room she blushed when she perceived any one staring at her. Lydy Figner, a charming lady and an accomplished singer, got her eight years in the Siberian mines by sitting in a parlor playing the piano for weary hours trying to drown the noise made by the secret printing press in the adjoining room. Anna Lebedeff, a priest's daughter, in the disguise of the wife of an humble switchman, lived in a watch-house on the railroad and was found on a box filled with dynamite, chatting with the switchman. Sophy Perovsky, the daughter of a General and Senator, who declined the dignity of maid of honor to the Empress, and entered the Nihilist fraternity, dug the Moscow mine and directed the late Czar's assassination. Sophy Bardin, who was welcomed as a shining star in the literary horizon, wrote a few poems which, though gems of Russian literature, were treasonable, and the singing of them is a State crime.

ON TROUBLED WATERS.

BY W. S. FULLER.

Long have I wandered over troubled waters,
Like helpless, storm-worn ship unmanned,
Fighting helpless 'gainst the cruel breakers,
And dreaming sadly of the long-lost land.

I linger for a moment, and look backward,
O'er dark waters to the happy shore,
Where linger youth, and love, and quiet faith,
All joys that I can here know nevermore.

I am tired! alone, I cannot struggle longer;
Kind hand outstretched, I yield myself to thee,
And Thou wilt guide me to a true heart's shelter,
That's better far than dream-born Aready.

"I Can't Be Worse Off."

BY H. S.

IT WAS BUT a poor room; the furniture was scanty, and very old fashioned and common; the floor was not carpeted, the walls were merely whitewashed, and the ceiling was cracked and dingy; but the room looked comfortable, warm, and cosy in the ruddy fire-light, which flickered and danced and made all sorts of grotesque forms with the shades. The kettle hissed and bubbled upon the hob, and the tea-tray set upon a little round table near the hearth, gave indications of an approaching meal.

Beside the fire sat a neat little woman in a clean print dress, with a round good-humored hopeful face, who seemed to be anxiously awaiting some one's coming. The old fashioned Dutch clock against the wall ticked heavily and gravely as became its age and nation, and the sharp black eyes of the little woman were every instant turned impatiently to its broad staring face and slow moving hands, as though she would like to quicken its movements; but the old time measurer heeded not the glance of those bright black eyes, which none but a Dutch clock could have resisted, and went on wagging its long, ghostly-looking pendulum in its own dull, apathetic manner, as though bidding defiance to all the bright eyes in Christendom in the grave consciousness of faithfully doing its duty.

At length, after a preliminary clearing of its rusty old throat, the clock struck six. Then, with a brisk movement, the impatient little woman jumped from her seat, lit a candle, and put the kettle on the hottest part of the fire, where it bubbled and spluttered in a most indignant manner, as though protesting against the imputation that it had not been—or at least the water in it—at 365 degrees Fahrenheit for the last half-hour, and passionately declaring the utter impossibility of getting any higher. Then measuring some tea in a cup, she put it into a little earthenware teapot and proceeded to "wet" it; this done, she removed the kettle to the coolest part of the hob, where its indignation was gradually appeased, and died away in convulsive sobs. Next she toasted some rashers of bacon, which made her face redder than ever. The bacon was soon cooked, the table drawn near to the fire, and every preparation for the meal complete; still no one came. The little woman grew more impatient than ever; but her glances, instead of being cast upon the clock, were now directed towards the door; she listened to every footstep, but could not hear the right one; the tea was ready, the bacon was frizzling—she could sit still no longer.

"Dear, dear, what can keep him!" she said, going to the window, and drawing aside the little calico blind to look into the street.

It was not a cheering prospect; there was just light enough without to show the ground and the housetops, covered with snow. It was the suburbs of a canny north-country town, and, except in the town itself, they never lit gas in the streets after the moon had entered her second quarter, the ruling powers entertaining a decided opinion that it was the duty of that terrestrial satellite to illuminate the streets every night after she had reached a certain age, at such hours as respectable citizens were abroad. Of course, if in consequence of her not shining an unhappy wight broke his nose over a door-step or some impediment in the pathway, it was the fault of the luminary whose duty it was "to show light," and nobody else's. As the moon is rather capricious in this part of the world, and is occasionally sulky and won't shine at all, threading the streets in this obscure quarter was rather a hazardous experiment, especially after a dinner or supper party.

On the night in question the chaste Diana, probably thinking it too cold to turn out, had wrapped herself up in a thick blanket of clouds, and ignored the world beneath altogether, so that all was very dull, cold, and miserable-looking, and the little woman soon turned away with a shiver, as though the very sight of the snow had chilled her.

Half an hour passed away, and then a slow, heavy tread, muffled by the snow, caused her to look up quickly; it stopped, and a hand was laid upon the latch. With a joyful exclamation she ran and opened the door. It was evidently the expected one.

A tall, thin, jaded, sallow looking man, entered the room; his threadbare black coat and thin shiny trousers looked but a poor protection against the cold. The only extra article of clothing was a cheap worsted comforter round his neck; this taken off, revealed an old black silk neckerchief, surmounted by a small quantity of limp collar.

"Why John, whatever has kept you so late?" said the little woman.

"Oh, the warehouse!" replied John, gloomily.

While his wife whisked about, pouring out tea, cutting bread and butter, serving the bacon, poking the fire and torturing once more the irascible kettle, John drew his chair towards the hearth, and spread his large red hands to catch the genial warmth; but it seemed to produce no cheering influence for him.

He had a melancholy, discontented face, fringed by an exuberance of whiskers; his eyes were dull and heavy-looking; his mouth was drawn down at the corners; his complexion saturnine; and the whole was surmounted by a profusion of shaggy hair.

How such a red-cheeked, fresh-complexioned, bright-eyed, good-tempered, hopeful smart, bustling little woman could have married such an ill-tempered, envious, discontented, heavy-looking man, was a mystery to every one.

A dramatic poet has said: "In joining contrasts, lieth Love's delight;" and that is the only suggestion we can offer on the subject.

"What a shame to keep you out such a night as this!" said the little woman, as she bustled about. "Why, the tea has been ready more than half an hour, and I am afraid it is half spoiled by this time. I am sure you look half-frozen.

"Now, John, I'll draw the table close to the fire, and you draw your chair a little nearer the table—that's it. Now we shall be cosy and comfortable, and a nice cup of tea will soon warm you. Do you feel any draught from the door? wait a minute, I'll put something down to it.

"Dear, dear, what a draughty house this is, to be sure! There, I don't think you'll feel the cold now.

"Now, come along, it's all ready. The bacon was beautiful half an hour ago, but I am afraid it's got rather dry; nice and streaky, just as you like it, and only sevenpence a pound—isn't that cheap?

"Why, what is the matter, John? has anything vexed you at that bothering warehouse? Has Mr. Flint been cross with you again?"

"No, nothing more than usual," growled John, beginning to attack the food, but in a discontented manner, as though he were doing it a favor by eating it.

"What makes you so cross to-night, then?" inquired the little woman.

"How can I help it?" said John, savagely cutting at his bread as though it were the cause of his woe. "How can I help it when I see everybody better off than myself?

"There isn't one in that warehouse but dresses better and lives better, and is more comfortable than I am; and what have I done that I should be marked out all my life to be worse off than anybody else?

"Everybody's happy but me; everybody's smiling and grinning, and talking about Merry Christmases and Happy New Years, and what they are going to do, and how they intend to amuse themselves. I believe they do it out of derision to me, because they know how miserable I am, and that I can't do any of those things."

"La, John!" said his wife, "what queer things you do take into your head, to be sure! What's the use of being discontented? that will never make things better, it makes 'em much worse.

"Something better will turn up soon, and then we'll have as Merry Christmases and Happy New Years as anybody, and I don't see that we have much reason to be very unhappy even this Christmas."

"Oh, it's all very well for you to talk!" said John; "you are like nobody else; you'd be contented in a gutter."

"Well, John, I am always thankful for what Providence sends me, if it's ever so little; and so we all should, if we only thought of how many are worse off than ourselves. Remember how many this very night are houseless and starving, without a crust to put in their mouths, or a roof to shelter them from the bitter cold; and look at us, with a fire like that, and nice warm tea, and bread and butter and bacon, and a warm bed to go to! Why, a quarter of all this would make hundreds happy this very night."

"Yes, and how many hundreds and thousands are revelling in luxuries to-night?" said John. "There's old Flint, he's not sitting down to tea and bacon after a hard day's work; no, he'll have every dainty of the season, and his bottle of wine after it—a month's wages of mine wouldn't find him a dinner.

"What's he done that he should be so much better off than I am? Here am I, for a beggarly eighteen shillings a week, carrying out parcels from morning to night; and you tell me I ought to be thankful for it."

"Well, who knows, you may one day be as well off as old Flint," returned the little woman, "and a master yourself, John; more unlikely things than that have happened. There are plenty in this town who were once a great deal worse off than you are, and are gentlemen now, living in big house with servants to wait upon them, and carriages to ride in."

"Oh, don't talk like a fool!" growled John,

"There's nothing foolish in it," said his wife; "why, Mrs. Cole, next door, was telling me the other day about a young man, I forget his name now, who went into an office first to run errands and do little things, and he rose to be head clerk, and when his master died he left him a thousand pounds and a share in the business, and now he has got it all, and keeps a carriage. Why, old Flint might do the same thing by you, as I said to Mrs. Cole, and she thought it was very likely. You know you have been with him ever since you were a boy, and you have always been a good and honest servant to him."

"That's the reason I am so badly off," replied John; "if I hadn't been honest I should be better off than I am now; at least, I can't be worse off than I am."

"That's what you are always saying, and I hope Providence won't punish you one day for being so wicked and ungrateful," said the little woman, with a sigh, for her cheerfulness began to fade before the obstinate gloom of her husband.

John did not deign a reply to her last remark, but having finished his meal, drew his chair close to the fire, and staring fixedly at the glowing embers, sat brooding like the genius of Despair. His wife, after clearing the table, put on her bonnet and shawl, and telling him she should not be away long, went out to market. And so he was left alone.

* * * * * * *

Obadiah Flint and company had an extensive warehouse and a shop in one of the busiest thoroughfares of the city, and did an extensive wholesale and retail business.

It was eight o'clock in the morning; John had just plodded in.

The warehouse was a dingy-looking building, decorated in front with a multitudinous number of windows, defended on the ground floor by iron stanchions.

The goods dealt in were drapery. It was a raw, thick, foggy December morning; not a gleam of daylight had yet fallen on the benighted city, and the shops were lit up as though it had been eight o'clock at night instead of eight o'clock in the morning, but the gas showed but dimly through the mist-covered windows.

The noise of traffic and business everywhere met the ear; all was life and bustle; footsteps clattered upon the pavements, vehicles rumbled upon the roads, the cries of cabmen, coachmen, and conductors filled the air; but, beyond the few feet around you, everything was hidden by an impenetrable veil.

Shadowy-looking cabs and omnibuses, drawn by phantom-like horses, exhaling clouds of smoke, rushed past every instant and shadowy men and women jostled you on the footways; but everything and everybody looked as vaporous and intangible as the atmosphere through which they moved.

One might have thought that while the living city slept, the dead one was holding an orgie, and acting over again the scenes of its life, so ghostly did everything look.

It was bitter cold in that large warehouse—the fog was almost as thick within as without. John stood there, with his hair as rough, his whiskers as shaggy, and his face as gloomy as on the preceding night. His thin, threadbare coat was buttoned up to his throat, and his hat drawn over his eyes. He looked very wretched, miserable and cold. Everybody looked more comfortable than he.

The clerks hurried in, wrapped up in thick overcoats and comforters, their legs protected by gaiters, with the appearance of men who had just quitted a warm fireside, and anticipated being soon beside another. The warehousemen looked cheerful, as they grew red in the face moving about large bales of goods, or blowing on their fingers to restore the circulation; but John stood there waiting for orders, frowning, shivering, and miserable.

There was a small room at the further end, in which blazed an excellent fire; several of the men were hastily warming their hands before it—it was free to all—but John preferred being cold to being sociable.

All around him pleasant greetings were interchanged—"A Merry Christmas!—A Happy New Year!" and at every repetition of the words, his heart filled more and more with bitterness, envy, and hatred. He would have no Merry Christmas or Happy New Year—nobody wished it to him—no; for had they tried, one look at his sullen face would have stifled the words in their throats.

Oh, what pleasure it would have afforded John, could he have dragged all those happy people down to his own wretched level! He regarded them all as personal enemies; the smile on their lips appeared to his jaundiced sight a smile of mockery at him; every eye seemed covertly turned upon him; and the merry twinkle which shone in so many, from pure happiness of heart, was to his sight a scornful leer; every face seemed to flout at his misery, and say, as plainly as words could express, "Ha, ha, look at that poor devil, how wretched he looks. What fun!"

Oh what a relief it would have been to have given way to his pent-up fury, and shrieked out the withering imprecations that filled his throat.

Presently the head of the firm—Mr. Obadiah Flint—hurried in. He was a little, thin, wiry, sharp-looking man, with a small head and face, and an enormous nose, which glowed like a burning coal in the frosty air. Every feature denoted caution; his eyes were ever darting about in all directions, as though in search of some imaginary pickpocket; his very hair darted out like porcupine's quills to ward off the touch of sharpers; and yet an acute observer could detect, beneath all this hardness, an expression, which seemed to indicate that he was not quite so hard as he seemed.

He was evidently in anything but a good humor that morning; he might have been annoyed, or the frost might have given him a finer edge; his eyes darted glances quicker than ever, and his coarse grey hair looked stiffer and more pointed than usual.

"Come into my office, John," he said, snappishly, as he hurried past.

John slowly obeyed. There was a difference here to the cold, misty warehouse; here the gas burnt brightly, humming and leaping as though revelling in its own warmth; a glowing fire roared halfway up the chimney, a thick carpet covered the floor, there was a cosy easy chair, and through the half opened cupboard door were discernible decanters, half filled with ruby or purple liquors; a large basket of game, decorated with holly, which had been sent from the country, was placed just inside the door; everything looked the very personification of comfort; and so thought John, as he stood half inside the room, holding the door in one hand and his hat in the other.

"Shut the door, you stupid dog!" shouted old Flint; "don't you feel how the cold air is rushing in? the place will be full of fog directly."

John let go the door, and it slammed, and his master looked at him sharply, but said nothing about that.

"Now," he continued, "before you go anywhere else, take that basket of game up to my house—do you hear?" he said, not receiving an answer.

"Very well," muttered John, sulkily.

"What do you mean by speaking to me in that tone?" roared his master; "you sulky, dirty, ill-conditioned looking rascal. The sight of your face is enough to make any one ill; you always look a disgrace to the firm, with your shaggy hair and dirty hands; I don't believe you ever wash yourself."

"Well, if you don't like it, I can go," said John.

Human nature, and especially the nature of a Flint, could bear no more—he, Obadiah Flint, the head of the house of Flint & Co., to be bearded and insulted in his own private office by his own porter! No words could paint such a monstrous crime; no punishment was adequate to it; his face literally blazed, his eyes scintillated, his hair bristled as though, like javelins, they were about to dart from his head and strike the offender dead; his wrath choked him; he could find no words to express it.

For a moment he was speechless, then he could only splutter forth, "Get out of the place, you vagabond, get out! and if ever you dare to enter it again, I'll have you put into prison—I'll have you exterminated off the face of the earth! Here's a week's wages for you—now go!"

John picked up the money which had been thrown at him, walked out of the office, and thence into the street, like a man in a dream. As yet he could scarcely realize what he had done; he was stupified. The fog had slightly cleared, but his mind seemed to have absorbed it, and he moved on unconscious of everything around him. He was crossing the road; in another moment he would have been under the wheels of a Hansom cab, but a cut from the whip of the driver aroused him from his stupor, and he sprang aside and shook his fist at the man, who replied only by a laugh and a crack of his whip, then, with curses on his lips, John strode on towards his home.

In a few minutes he was there. His wife was sweeping and cleaning. She looked unutterable surprise at seeing him, a glance at his face, and the heavy, listless manner with which he cast himself into a chair, told her something was wrong. The ruddy face turned pale; she paused in her work.

"What is the matter, John?" she asked, in an anxious tone; "what has happened?"

He drew his wages from his pocket, threw it upon the table, and said, recklessly, "Old Flint has kicked me out like a dog, because I wouldn't put up with his insolence. That's what's the matter."

"Oh, John, what have you done? What will become of us?" said the poor little woman, dropping into a chair, her bright eyes filling with tears.

"What will become of us?" he repeated, with a savage laugh; "why, we shall starve to be sure, Well, I can't be worse off than I am!"

* * * * * * *

It was still winter; the frost and snow still lay upon the ground, and the dark sky above threatened more. It had been a terrible time for the poor; many perished of cold and hunger; many an unhappy wretch wandered nightly in the streets, with tears freezing on his hollow cheeks; many brooded, starving in their miserable hovels, over fireless grates, revolving desperate crimes to wreak their vengeance on an unfeeling world that revelled while they perished.

Such a picture as the last was presented in the little house with which our story opens.

There no longer reigned that air of homely comfort which once redeemed and brightened its poverty. A cheerful fire no longer blazed in the grate, the song of the kettle was hushed, and there were no signs of an approaching meal, as when we first entered it. Yet it was about the same hour; but there was no longer a clock to indicate it; that had gone days ago to buy bread.

Nor was that the only thing sacrificed; the blankets from the bed, the clothes from the drawers, the very chairs—all had gone, article by article, to keep the wolf from the door; but he had come at last!

The room was utterly denuded of furniture, except a bed covered by a ragged coverlid, which was placed in one corner, a couple of stools, and a small deal table.

Over a few smouldering ashes, which yet glimmered in the grate, cowered a wretched looking man; his cheeks were hollow, and his eyes had the glare of famine. It was John. He was alone.

Presently the street door opened, and his wife came in. The change in her showed, perhaps, more than in the room or the man.

The cheerful, hopeful look was gone; the ruddy face was blanched by cold; the smooth round cheek wrinkled and hollowed by want; the bright eyes dimmed by weeping and despair.

A thin cotton shawl, and an old, worn-

out, washed-out dress were almost her sole covering.

She had a little bundle under her arm when she came in. As she sank exhausted into a chair, the bundle dropped upon the floor, and unrolled.

It was an old, very old sheet; the pawnbroker had refused it; it was their last hope—it had failed. Nearly two days had elapsed since they had tasted food.

"They won't take it in," she said, in a faint voice. "What will become of us! We shall starve to death!" And she sobbed bitterly.

John had looked up eagerly as she entered, with all the intense longing of the famine-stricken, expecting bread.

It was terrible to note the change that fell upon his face as he saw the bundle drop, and heard her words. His head sank upon his breast, but he did not speak.

The silence was more expressive than the ravings of despair. When he heard her sobbing he looked up; much as his heart was filled with envy and hatred, there was still one green spot in it; though he was often rough to her, and never outwardly evinced any affection towards her—though the whole world was indifferent to him, perhaps hated by him, he still loved his wife; and a yet sharper pang pierced him as he looked upon her sufferings. He rose from his chair, and going to her, put his arm round her, and kissed her.

It was a simple act, nothing to excite wonderment in a husband; but from John it meant much. His wife, in the midst of her woe, looked wonderingly at him. She felt a hot tear, that came not from her own eyes, drop upon her cheek. He snatched up his hat—she made a movement to stop him.

"Sit still," he said, in his old, sharp manner; "we must have bread. Come what may, I can't be worse off than I am!" and he hurried out of the house.

There was something in John's eye which struck his wife with fear, but before she could stay him he was gone.

A vague sense of terror incited her to follow him. He was nearly out of sight when she got into the street; but running as fast as her trembling limbs would carry her, she slightly gained upon him.

He seemed conscious that his steps were dogged, and, quickening his pace, ran down an alley and disappeared.

She made fresh exertions to overtake him, but unluckily one of her shoes came off in the snow; when she regained it, he was gone.

For a time she wandered about, but fruitlessly; she did not again catch sight of him. The snow began to fall, mingled with a fine sleet, but faint with hunger and misery, she could go no farther, and spite of the frozen ground, sat down upon a doorstep and wept bitterly.

Presently she was roused by a harsh voice, saying, "Come, my good woman, you can't stop there. Get up, and go home, or I must take you off to the station house."

It was a policeman. Go home! what a home was hers! But she rose, and with the tears still streaming from her eyes, and her lips quivering with sobs, wandered away hatlessly, she knew not whither.

* * * * * *

With a hurried step and desperate heart, John pressed onwards through the narrow streets until he emerged into one of the great thoroughfares.

The snow and sleet were falling thickly, and soon drenched through his thin and tattered clothes. The mud and snow oozed through his broken boots, and soaked his feet; but he heeded it not, felt it not—all was dead to him save the fierce despair that gnawed within.

Spite of the miserable weather, the streets looked gay; the brilliantly-lighted shops were crowded with every luxury of civilized life; cabs and carriages dashed along, bearing the occupants to their warm homes; through the drawn curtain of private houses shone the ruddy glow of blazing fires, mingled with the softer light of the lamps or chandeliers; and at times, through the yet uncurtained windows, were glimpses of happy groups—of mothers, fathers, and children, gathered round cheerful hearths.

Such sights as these were maddening to the poor, shivering, hungry wretch; he seemed alone in his misery, cut off from humanity—a doomed being, with the curse of Salathiel clinging to him.

Onwards he went, stopping for an instant to cast a hungry glance upon the dainties exposed for sale, or lingering with longing eyes before a baker's shop.

At length, wet to the skin, and almost exhausted, he stood before the warehouse of Obadiah Flint & Co. It was closing time; all the lights were extinguished, save one, which showed through the window of the principal's private office.

John was so faint that he was obliged to lean against the wall for support; there was a swimming sensation in his head; his limbs seemed sinking beneath him.

The fierceness of despair, which had hitherto given him strength, was gone, and in its place came the physical and mental debility of famine, which prostrates every faculty of body and mind. He could struggle no longer; he would submit to any degradation; do anything to obtain a mouthful of food.

Mr. Flint's carriage was waiting at the door; when he came out he would beg a shilling of him to buy bread; he surely would not be so hard-hearted as to refuse; at least, he would try him.

It was a terrible humiliation, but at that moment he scarcely felt it to be such, every feeling was absorbed in that one resistless pang—hunger.

John walked across the road, and placed himself near the warehouse door. A few minutes afterwards the light disappeared from the window, and his old master, carefully muffled up, emerged into the street. The carriage steps were lowered, and he was just stepping in when John stood beside him.

The apparition was so sudden and unexpected the he started, and his foot slipped to the ground. For an instant he did not recognize his old servant.

"Curse the fellow!" he exclaimed, "what do you mean by——Oh, its you, is it? So this is what your insolence has brought you to? How dare you come near me?"

"I am starving," replied John,—"dying with hunger. Pray give me a shilling to buy bread."

"Oh, so you have taken up begging, have you?" said Mr. Flint. "I suppose it is an easier life than working. I'll not give you a farthing.

"I never encourage vagabonds; if you ever dare to address me again I'll give you in charge. I would now, if there was a police man near," he added, as he hurried into the carriage and bade the coachman drive on.

John stood for a moment with his hat in his hand, the snow and sleet beating upon his bare head. Suddenly a desperate thought dashed upon his brain.

"I have begged and been refused; what he refused to give I'll take. I can't be worse off than I am."

This weakness again passed off for a time, and John ran after the carriage.

In a few minutes it turned out of the busier streets and entered a more retired quarter of the town; there was no footman so he jumped up behind.

In half-an-hour it reached a suburban square; the rain was now falling heavily; the thoroughfares in this neighborhood were utterly deserted, not a living being was visible.

The square but dimly lighted; Mr. Flint's residence stood somewhat back from the other houses; a large building which abutted forward stood next to it, and threw a deep shadow on the spot.

Before the carriage drew up, John glided down from his seat; then, with a quick movement, sprang upon the box, and before the coachman was aware of it, he seized his whip and struck him heavily across the head.

The attack was so sudden that the coachman dropped instantly from his box to the road, where he lay senseless. This done, quick as lightning the desperate man pulled open the carriage door, and before the occupant could utter a word, clutched him by the throat and demanded his money.

The old man endeavored to cry out, but the grasp tightened so as almost to strangle him; with a trembling hand he fumbled in his pocket and produced his purse.

At that instant John heard footsteps in the hall; not a moment was to be lost; snatching the purse, he dashed his victim upon the pavement; the house door opened but he was gone.

Cries and footsteps were behind him; he was pursued, and there was little hope of escape.

He made for the open country; the steps and cries grew more numerous and seemed nearer.

He had now left the inhabited parts behind him; he had passed the last gas-lamp—in a few seconds he would be in the fields where there would be a chance for him; he redoubled his efforts; he was distancing his pursuers; the trees and hedges rose darkly against the sky; his heart leaped with hope.

Suddenly his foot struck against some obstacle that lay in the road; with fearful violence he fell to the ground; there he lay senseless. When he revived he was in prison.

* * * * * *

There was a lapse of time. John was awaiting his trial. He was sitting on his bench, his face buried in his hands.

He did not hear the cell door open; he was unconscious of the presence of another until a hand was laid upon his shoulder; then he started, and looked up—it was his wife!

She had much changed, even since we last saw her. Her clothes looked more worn, more washed-out; they hung in folds about her wasted form; her face was overspread with that yellow sickly hue which denoted ill-health.

"John!" she said, in a low, faint voice.

"Mary!" he replied, and that was all.

It was the first time that John had seen his wife since the night of the robbery; it was a piteous sight, and it struck him to the heart; he made room for her on the bench beside him, and took her hand but both were silent for many minutes; the thoughts of both were busy with the past.

"Mary," said he, "you have been ill. What have you done since I have been here?"

"I have been very ill," she replied; "but I am better now; the neighbors were very good to me. I should have died but for their kindness. I never knew how much kindness there was in the world till now."

There was another pause; then John said, "Mary, I have thought much since I have been here, and I feel that I have been very wicked, always repining at my lot, and never thankful for the many blessings that Providence bestowed upon me.

"I am deservedly punished for my unthankfulness; but it is hard, very hard, that you, who have ever been so hopeful, with a heart so full of joy and gratitude—you who have ever been so good, so kind, so true and loving in your nature, should be crushed under the deserved punishment of a wretch like me."

His head sank upon his breast; he felt an arm gently and lovingly encircle his neck—a kiss upon his forehead; then he heard his wife's soothing voice.

"Don't fret about me, John; don't say any more about it. You had many sore trials to endure and perhaps, had I been in your place, I should have been no more patient than you. Besides, no one can help their nature."

"Mine was a very bad one," he murmured; "and I never tried to check it."

"No, don't say that, John. Whatever may be your faults, you had always a good heart. You were always a kind husband to me."

"No, Mary, I was not; if I had been, you would now be a happy woman, not sitting as you are, in the prime of your life, broken down by sickness, sorrow, and starvation, in the cell of a prison, beside a felon.

"What is to become of you now? what is to become of you? God help you!—God help you!" And he moaned in very anguish of soul.

"And God will help me," said Mary, meekly; "and you too, and all who pray to him. He never deserts those who trust in him."

John made no answer—perhaps he did not hear his wife—but continued to rock himself to and fro, with a low moan, that was piteous to hear.

"Oh!" he at lenghth exclaimed in a bitter tone, "if I could but recall the past; if I could but find myself once more in that little home which you tried to make so happy and comfortable for me!—and to think that I shall never see that home again; never sit beside you at our own fireside again, never more see you cheerful and happy; and when all these blessings were mine I was so wicked as to say that I could not be worse off than I was! I am bitterly punished for those words, bitterly punished."

Mary did not answer; her arm still lay round his neck, her head had fallen upon his shoulder; she leant very heavily, and was quite still.

For a time he was scarcely sensible of this; presently he thought it strange. Her hand rested in his; he took it between his own; it felt colder than when last he pressed it; the cell was so chilly; he drew her towards him; her head fell forward upon her bosom; she must have fainted—no, she was dead!

He uttered a terrible cry, then a mist gathered before his eyes, confused sounds rang in his ears, a mocking voice, multiplied by a thousand echoes, shouted, "Ha, ha, you can't be worse off than you are."

The dead face of his wife had changed suddenly into the semblance of a grinning fiend; then, with a tremendous crash, the roof and walls of the prison gave way and fell upon him in one hideous ruin.

* * * * * *

The slamming of the street door, and the entrance of his wife, had aroused John. He awoke; and lo! it was a dream!

"Oh, John!" she cried, putting down her small marketing-basket, which was pretty well filled, "I declare you have nearly let the fire out; and it is so dreadfully cold! Why, how odd you look. One would think you had seen a ghost!"

John did indeed look frightened; the images of his dream had melted before his vision; they still appeared more real than the scene before him; so much so, that he was in doubt whether this was not the dream, the other the reality.

He could almost fancy he still felt the dead weight upon his shoulder, the chill hand of the corpse clasped within his own. But no, it could not be. Thank heaven! there stood his wife, as healthy, and plump, and merry-looking as ever; her cheeks, and the tip of her nose, purple with the frosty air; and her bright black eyes fixed upon him in astonishment. He could not help it; he had never done such a thing before; at least, if he had, it must have been at a very remote period of his life; so remote, indeed, that nobody could remember it; he actually threw his arms round his wife's neck and kissed her, which he had no sooner done than he felt very much astonished at himself, and looked like a man who had done something very silly.

As for the little woman, if at that moment the Emperor of all the Russias had entered the room, and caught her in his arms, her astonishment would probably have been of a mild nature to what it was now. She actually gasped for breath.

"Why, John," she said, as soon as she could speak, "whatever ails you?"

Curious suspicions began to dawn upon her excited mind that during her absence he had, by some unknown and inexplicable means, obtained and imbibed alcoholic fluids in undue quantities.

"Never mind, Mary," he said, playfully squeezing her arm. "Make up the fire, and then I'll talk to you."

Wonders on wonders. John actually smiled. Certainly it was a queer smile, and on anybody else's countenance might have been mistaken for a grimace; but John intended it for a smile, and therefore it must have been a smile. Then he went to the table, and opened the basket the little woman had just brought in, and peeped into it.

"What have you got here? Beef, and raisins, and currants. Why, we shall dine like princes to-morrow!"

"Yes, John," she said, her face beaming with pleasure. "Do you know, that for the last six or seven weeks I have been putting by a trifle every week towards getting a Christmas dinner, intending it as a little surprise for you. I should have told you before I went out, but you were so cross and sulky, that I thought I'd punish you by keeping you in ignorance a little longer."

Mary looked so good, pretty, and pleasant, as in a tone of much glee she unfolded her little harmless secret, that John couldn't help giving her another, and another kiss.

His embraces, however, were rather rough and somewhat awkward, something like what might be expected from a good-tempered bear afflicted with rheumatism.

"Oh, he must have been drinking! but goodness knows where he got it!" thought the little woman, as after this second outburst of affection she extricated herself, and began to make up the fire.

Suddenly, as Mary was in the act of throwing on a shovelful of coals, she stood transfixed by a peculiar sound that fell upon her ears—she must be dreaming—it could not be. Yes, it was—John was whistling. It was a strange sepulchral sort of whistle, such a one as a veteran mute might indulge in on a rainy day when a funeral was considerably behind the time of starting. Viewed even under those extenuating circumstances it could not be considered a success; the most imaginative person could not have discovered the slightest approximation in it to any known tune, dog call, or any other call invented by the ingenuity of man.

His lips seemed indisposed or unable to screw themselves up into the proper form, doubtless paralysed, by astonishment at being called upon to perform such an unheard of and extravagant act. Nevertheless, it was a whistle.

Ideas still darker and more startling began to take possession of the little woman's mind, when her meditations were interrupted by a loud knock at the street door.

John took the candle and opened it. Outside stood a boy with a large basket upon his shoulder.

"Is your name John Grumps?" he inquired.

"Yes," replied John.

"Then here's a basket for you," said the boy; "nothing to pay."

"Stop!" cried John, as the boy was going; "it must be a mistake; it can't be for me."

"Don't know anything about that; you'll have to take it in," said the boy, and away he walked.

It was John's turn to be astonished now, as he lifted the basket, which the boy had deposited in the passage, and carried it into the kitchen. It was tolerably heavy too.

"La! John," said Mary, for she had overheard the short dialogue, "who can have sent it? and what can be in it?"

The strings which secured the contents were soon cut, and the cover raised; and then, one after another, John took out a splendid turkey, a number of grocers' parcels containing tea and sugar, and all the ingredients for a Christmas pudding; and last, but not least, a bottle of brandy.

Various were the little woman's expressions of surprise and delight, as each succeeding present was disclosed to her curious gaze.

As to John, he was too surprised to say anything. There was not the slightest clue to the donor, not even an address card.

"Oh, John," said his wife, "what a Christmas we shall have. Why, old Flint himself can't have a better. We'll have a party; I'll run and invite mother and father to dine with us, and your sister and her husband shall come too. Shan't we enjoy ourselves!" exclaimed the little woman, clapping her hands, and almost dancing with glee. "Well, John," she added, laughing, "don't you now think we may be worse off than we are?"

"Mary," said John, looking very grave at this little bit of sarcasm, "you will never hear those words come from my lips again. Sweep the hearth, and then sit down, and I'll tell you a dream I had while you were away."

When Mary had made everything neat and cosy, she drew her chair close to John's, and anxiously awaited the promised narrative; but before he began, John looked around him.

The fire blazed merrily, everything wore an air of comfort, and for the first time in his life the survey of his little home warmed his heart with a glow of happiness.

Then he told his wife his dream, and when he came to that part which related to herself he drew his chair yet closer to her and took her hand in his, and she nestled close to him; and when he came to where she died on his shoulder, his arms glided almost unconsciously around her; and when he finished she was sobbing on his breast, and his own tears were trickling fast down upon her head.

There was silence for several minutes; then Mary lifted up her head, and laid her hand upon his shoulder, and said, in a graver tone than she usually spoke.

"Dear John, God has sent this dream as a warning to you, and I hope it will prove a blessing, by showing you the wickedness of being discontented.

"How dreadful it would have been had these things really happened to us. How wrong it is to doubt the goodness of Providence. How often it sends us some unexpected bounty. Look at this present to-night. I do believe that some good angel has sent it to rebuke you;" and the little woman, looked as if she really did believe so.

It was a happy party that assembled beneath John's humble roof on that Christmas Day, and the little woman felt very happy—so happy, that her eyes were continually filling with tears; so much so, that in consequence of not being able to see distinctly, she made some very grave mistakes at the dinner table; but they only served to increase the good humor of the guests, and gave rise to many jokes, which, if they were not very witty, excited laughter, which is much better.

Of course the health of the unknown donor who had brought about the assem-

blage was repeatedly drunk, and the oftener it was drunk, the more enthusiastic everybody became, until, if a stranger who had known nothing of the matter had stepped in, he would have supposed they were toasting some universal philanthropist, who had made, or was going to make, the whole human race happy.

When the dinner was cleared away, everybody drew towards the fire. John sat next to his wife, and presently he put his arm round her waist, when all the party became very facetious, and said that "one would think they were courting."

And so they were—at least John had never courted before: and as people are addicted to do such foolish things during that blissful period of human life, and seldom more than a month afterwards, it must be set down that John was courting.

Of course those who knew John—and all who were present knew him very well—were greatly astonished at the change that had come over him; so, after dinner, he told them his dream, and they all said it was a warning.

When the holidays were over, John went to the warehouse quite another man: his hair cut and combed, and his beard trimmed; and although his clothes were the same, they somehow looked different, as though the change that had been worked in the inward man had communicated itself to his attire.

He never discovered who sent him his Christmas dinner. The first morning he appeared at the warehouse, old Flint asked him, with a grim smile, how he had enjoyed his Christmas; then, before he could reply, spoke to him in a short, snappish tone, and sent him away upon a commission.

There was one singular fact—several of the old servants had received presents similar to John's, and in the same mysterious manner.

Time passed gradually on, and things began to look up for John.

He became head warehouseman, which was a comfortable situation; and as his fortune improved, so did his appearance, and in the course of years he became as plump and as pleasant-looking as his wife, so that no one could possibly recognize in him the sour-visaged, dissatisfied individual of former days.

John has kept his word. From the night of his dream, he has never been heard to say, "I CAN'T BE WORSE OFF THAN I AM!"

Our Young Folks.

THE OLD CLOCK.

BY M. M. C.

THE LIGHTS had already been out more than an hour in the room, and through the open door of the adjoining bed-room the gentle breathing of the sleepers could be heard.

Then there came a slight rustling at the door, and somebody in a little white night-gown entered the room.

It was little Paul, dragging his counterpane and pillow after him to the sofa, on which he arranged them to his liking, then lay down, and became as quiet as a mouse.

He wanted to sleep quite close to-night, so that he could see them very early in the morning, as soon as he woke.

But it was almost still in the winter street for the window, for what any body went by, the soft snow deadened the sound of his steps; and besides, there was only a far-away sound of voices singing, borne on the still night air.

But there was something always lively in the room, and that was the large old clock that had belonged to Paul's grandmother.

It consisted of a high narrow case, with a larger piece at the top, in the centre of which, behind a pane of glass, was the large porcelain dial.

At a distance it looked like a figure, the dial forming a face. It was a very handsome clock outside, for it was covered with inlaid figures, and arabesques of ivory, and mother-of-pearl; but it had, besides, two especial, wonderful qualities, for it was constructed to play a song upon little bells inside, once each time the long hand stood at twelve, or twenty-four times a day.

As soon as the tune was ended there was a whirr inside, and then the hour struck. Besides, each time the short hand stood at twelve, a cracking noise was heard at the top, and figures came out—the Virgin with the child Jesus on her arm, and a crown of gold on her head, with right and left, every angels and clouds.

Then, tick-tack went the pendulum, solemnly, like grandmother's step up and down the carpeted floor.

And little Paul said 'tick-tack, tick-tack,' in thought, as he listened to the monotonous movement of the clock-case. Just then a whirr was heard, and the chimes began to play 'A strong fortress is our God,' then it slowly struck eleven.

Paul counted each stroke, and then began to say tick-tack again. However, the clock no longer said tick-tack, but quite distinctly it said, dance, and then he thought he heard a gentle cracking noise, and felt a tiny ray of light before his eyes.

He turned round, and saw that one candle after another on the Christmas tree was cracking and shining; flame, flame, again two more, and so on, till even the candle at the very top of the Christmas Angel's hand was lighted.

Little Paul laughed to himself, for now he could distinctly see everything under the tree.

Straight in front of him was a fortress with the sentinels just as he had placed them, and the large cannon, then the swords and the zigzag stand covered with brightly painted wooden soldiers, and behind them was the court fool, named Hans, in vandyked jacket and pointed cap and bells, half leaning against the box in which the tree was planted, and Paul fancied that he was winking at him that very minute.

'Schnick-schnack,' said the clock, all at once; 'schnick-schnack;' and Hans sprang to his feet, rattling all his bells, and exclaiming, merrily, in a squeaky little voice, 'What a blessing, at last I can stretch my limbs;' and then he turned a somersault in the air; 'but I must see where the lovely princess has got to, she was standing close to me, and I must confess I admire her extremely.

'I'll find her, even if I upset everything on the table.' Saying which, he stepped over the cannon, and away to the place where the presents belonging to Helen, Paul's little sister, were lying.

'Will you allow me the honor of amusing you, most mighty Princess?' Paul heard him say behind the Christmas tree; and then he came back, daintily leading with the tips of his fingers, Helen's new doll.

'I do not know what you mean,' said the lady; 'I am no princess.'

'Excuse me,' continued Hans; 'I know better. You are wearing the most exquisite blue silk dress, with real lace trimming; and then you have something so dignified in your eyes, and a certain stiff bearing, which is truly majestic. I can tell a princess in a hundred.'

'Are you, then, a prince?' asked the doll. 'You are wearing very beautiful clothes, of every color of the rainbow. And you make music whenever you move; that is most extraordinary.'

'Of course I am a prince,' assented Hans. 'I create a sensation wherever I go, and that is the mark of a prince. Do you not see the vandyked border on my cap? that denotes a crown: and all that you see here is subject to me. But I must quickly arrange your court; it is not seemly for a princess to be without a court.'

Then he invited the lady to take a seat on the cannon, and went away.

When he came back, he had all the little dolls out of Helen's dolls' house behind him, and they had to stand and curtsey in front of the cannon.

'I shall arrange a ride for you,' said Hans to the doll in blue; 'you are on a visit to me, and must be entertained.'

Then appeared Paul's new couch and dappled gray horses.

They seated themselves in the couch, and away they went round the table, on the edge of which the whole court was standing, dripping wet.

They drove once so close to the sofa on which Paul was lying, that he thought he could seize them with his hands, but they paid no heed to him.

'Stop,' suddenly said the blue doll in the couch; 'I'm quite giddy.'

And when Hans called out, 'Stop,' the grays stood still.

He then took the princess round the waist again, and with one spring they were out of the couch, and with a second, on the top of the table, having jumped right over the whole court.

'I am exhausted,' said the princess, fanning herself with her apron.

'What a pity,' said Hans. 'I should have liked to ride a hobby-horse down there for your entertainment, and then to have had a sword fight. But perhaps you are hungry?'

'You are very kind,' answered the doll, 'and are giving yourself a great deal of trouble on my account.'

'Most lovely princess!' cried Hans, raising his hands, with enthusiasm, 'anyone who has seen your forget-me-not eyes but once even, would certainly be ready to do anything for you. And I will do something so extraordinary, that all that you have hitherto seen shall simply fade away. Are you fond of nuts?'

'Yes,' lisped the princess.

'Well, then, I will crack three nuts for you with my nose.'

He gathered them from the Christmas tree, and then waited a moment, keeping his eye on the clock.

'Knack-knack!' said the pendulum in the clock-case; 'Knack-knack!'

'That's it, now I can begin,' said Hans, as he struck his long, pointed nose on the nuts. 'Knick-knack, knick-knack!' it went, till the nuts were cracked. Then Hans peeled the kernels and handed them to the blue princess, who ate them.

'Well, what do you think of that?' said Hans, proudly.

'It must require a great deal of strength,' answered the doll; 'but, of course, you can do something better than that?'

'Certainly,' he said; 'and you shall see in a minute. May I venture to ask your name, adorable princess?'

'Caroline,' replied the doll.

At this moment Paul heard the clock say something quite different; this time it was quite distinctly 'Hip-hop, hip-hop.'

'Pay great attention,' said Hans, 'now I am dancing letters.' Saying which, he stood on his head, and began to dance round while the doll tried to see what letters of the alphabet he was forming.

'Charming,' she cried, as she looked at him, tenderly. 'You have danced my name; I could read Caroline quite distinctly.'

'Isn't it good?' said Hans, who, in the meantime, had sprung to his feet again. 'You will not easily find a man who will dance your name for you with his head. Now number three.

'Vip, op' was suddenly heard from the pendulum in the clock-case; and Hans began to jump, at first only a foot high, and then higher and higher, till he reached the topmost twig of the Christmas tree, where hung an immense sugar-heart, surmounted with brilliant red sugar flames; this he gathered, as he rebounded back, and politely offered it to the princess, as he bent his knee before her. A paper was attached to it, and on it were the words:

'My heart beats quick for thee alone
Say, darling, will thou be mine own?'

'That was, certainly, the most wonderful feat of all,' said the princess, when she had read the motto, and had become quite crimson and agitated. 'By-and-by you may give me a kiss; but you must first put your nose a little on one side.'

'Dare I hope to be accepted?' asked Hans.

'Yes,' answered the doll. 'Any one would think herself fortunate to get you for a husband, you are so polite and amusing.' Then she closed her eyes, and Hans gave her a long, resounding kiss.

'Now I am really tired,' said the doll, 'and I should like to go to sleep. You may sit down a little, and sing me a lullaby; but, first of all, dismiss my maidens; I do not need them when I am asleep."

'Only a lady's maid,' suggested Hans.

Then all the little dolls went away, except the one with the pretty little cap. She went to the princess, and then they both lay down on Paul's new coat, which had been one of his presents, and Hans seated himself in his own place, and sang quite softly, with his squeaky little voice:

Hans loves the princess
And the princess loves Hans.'

Always the same words, till, at last, they were all asleep.

THE WONDERS OF PAPER.

"THERE are very few things that can't be made out of paper, and the people, as a general thing, have no idea of its general usefulness. A paper car wheel, made entirely of paper, is much more durable than a steel one. The wheel is made entirely of paper rings pressed together under a pressure of six tons, and then fastened. When the rings are laid loosely upon each other, they form a stack as high as the shoulders of an ordinary man. When this great pressure is put upon them they sink to the proper thickness. They are then fastened by means of bolts, and a steel tire put on them, when they are ready for use. In running, these wheels are much more durable than steel ones, and also much safer and easier to run, as they are more flexible. If the steel tire should chance to wear or fall off the wheel, the paper is compressed so hard that it would not cause the slightest accident, as the wheels in use on trains have been known to run to their journey's end with a tire off a wheel and the pressure on the paper. Then they are much cheaper than the other wheels. For instance, take a paper wheel, which will run 2,400,000 miles without wearing out; the cost for the entire distance will be $3.30, or thirteen and three-fourths cents per 1,000 miles. The cost of a steel or iron wheel to run 200,000 miles will be $33.34, or sixteen and two-thirds cents per 1,000 miles. The paper wheel is as much more durable as 2,400,000 exceeds 200,000, which is a vast difference. If the train should chance to run off the track there would be no danger of a wheel breaking, as they are very flexible and would spring. The hardness to which paper can be pressed is very remarkable, as is also its strength. A paper box of any article can be made out of rim fibres and compressed so hard that nothing but a diamond tool can make an indentation into it. At one mill there is a square block of compressed paper fastened on a turning lathe, and it is so hard that if a fine steel chisel is held against it when it is moving, instead of cutting the paper it will break the chisel into a hundred pieces. The most remarkable thing about paper is its strength. Take for illustration, a bank note of the Bank of England. These notes are made by a peculiar process, which is known only to the English mints.

The process is such as to make the linen fibre into the paper without destroying any of its strength. You can take a five-pound note of the bank of England and twist it in your fingers into a kind of rope, and you can then suspend 329 pounds upon one end of it and not injure it in the slightest. There is an article—a small kitchen or house truck on wheels, used for wheeling loads around the house. The sides and bottom of this are very thin, but made of finely compressed paper, and it is capable of bearing a weight of five tons. Bath tubs and pots are made in the same manner by compressing the paper made out of linen fibres and annealed—that is, painted over with a composition which becomes part of the paper and is fire-proof. The tubes will last forever, and never leak, or you can put them in the fire and they will not burn up. It is almost impossible to break them, as you can beat on them with a hammer and not indent them in the least. A boat is made of paper and pressed over a mould and made very solid. In driving screw bolts in these it requires but very little pressure. Plates are made of paper, compressed and annealed, and are also very durable; you can wash them and not injure them in the slightest, or can drop them on the floor and stand on them. The plates are cheaper and much handsomer than china ones. Knives and forks are made in the same manner as the others, by compressing the paper. The fork can be used for any practical purpose, and is as good as a steel one, and the knife will last forever and can always be kept sharp. Then another great use to which paper can be applied is to substitute it for any kind of wood. It is a growing complaint in this country, that black walnut is getting very scarce, and furniture manufacturers are talking of substituting cherry and other woods for it. There are picture frames made of paper and colored like walnut, and so perfect that no one could detect them without cutting them." The paper makes a much harder and better piece of furniture than wood itself. A bedstead made of paper looks beautiful, and is everlasting. It is made in the same manner as the car wheels, only they are made out of long strips of paper instead of paper rings. Another very valuable article which can be made out of paper is a cooking or heating stove. Paper stoves are annealed, and it is impossible to burn them out, and they are much cheaper than iron.

Among its other properties, remarks a prominent maker is, "that it may be eaten. I have eaten it, and liked it very much. I took a large amount of it prepared like mush, and ate it in soup, and found it very palatable. I tell you you can make, or do almost anything with paper. When I build another house I intend to build it from foundation stone to roof out of paper. We can make a house out of paper, and one that will last forever, furnish it finely with paper furniture, make all the dishes, stoves, knives and forks, and all other articles in the house out of paper. I have frequently noticed and admired some of the largest buildings, and it might be somewhat strange when I state that a building just like them could be erected out of paper, only it would be much more durable. Printing presses, cases, type, and all the fixtures of an office could be made out of paper, and would be much cheaper than the ordinary ones, as well as more durable. Another thing which can be made out of paper is a complete steam engine, which would do all the duties of a metal one and last longer. The fact of the matter is that there is not an article that cannot be made, and splendidly made, out of paper. I think it is by far the most useful thing in the world. The time it takes to transform a linen fibre into a fine car wheel or other article is twenty-nine hours. It will take some little time longer to make paper clothes and shoes."

SENTIMENTAL GEOGRAPHY.—Anthony Van Diemen, Governor of Batavia, had a daughter, whose name was Maria. Since she was not only charming and accomplished, but also the only child of a rich papa, who was governor of the Dutch East Indies, Maria's image was impressed on many a heart, and she had no lack of suitors. There were great men among them; but with [illegible] Maria most favored a poor young sailor [illegible] some, dashing fellow, who was wooing [illegible] in earnest; but who had no [illegible], or no use for any. The young [illegible] name was Abel Tasman. He was devoted to Maria heart and soul, had exchanged pledges with her, and had brought matters to so serious a pass, that the proud father determined to put the young adventurer quietly and courteously out of sight; the doing so he took to be a better and more fatherly course than the institution of a great family quarrel. That his Maria should become Mrs. Tasman, he knew very well was a thing not for a moment to be thought of. Whoever won his daughter must have wealth and a patent of nobility. She was no fit mate for a poor sailor. Tasman, however, could be easily dismissed from dangling after her.

The Batavian traders had at that time a vague notion that there was a vast continent—an unknown Australia land somewhere near the South Pole; and Van Diemen determined to send Tasman out to see about it. If he never came back it would not matter; but, at any rate, it would be certainly a long time [illegible]. Van Diemen, therefore fitted out an expedition, and gave to young Tasman the command of it.

Off the west coast of [illegible], in the year 1642, and, like an [illegible] as he was, the first new ground he discovered was a considerable stretch of land, now forming a very well known English colony, he named after his dear boy, Van Diemen's Land, and put Miss Van Diemen's Christian name beside her patronymic, by giving the name of Maria to a small adjoining island close to the southeastern extremity of the new land. That land—Van Diemen's Land—we have of late begun very generally to call after its discoverer, Tasman.

Continuing his journey southward, the young sailor anchored his ships on the eighteenth of December, in a small bay, which he called Murderers' Bay, because the natives there attacked his ships, and killed three of his men. Travelling on, he reached after some days the islands which he called after the three kings, because he saw them on the feast of the Epiphany; and then, coming upon New England from the north, he called it in a patriotic way, after the States of Holland, Staten Land, but the extreme northern point of it, a fine bold headland jutting out into the sea, strong as his love, he entitled again Cape Maria. For he had gone out resolved not to leave her name on [illegible] of trees," but to do his mistress the same sort of honor in a way that would be nobler, manlier, and more enduring.

After a long and prosperous voyage, graced by one or two [illegible], Tasman came back to Batavia and to Governor Van Diemen [illegible].

SO PREVALENT AND SO FATAL HAS CONSUMPTION become, that it is now everywhere dreaded as the great scourge of humanity; and yet, in its first and second stages, all Pulmonary Complaints may be resisted, relieved and cured by resorting promptly to Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, a remedy capable of working wonders in the cure of Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections. Sold by all Druggists.

Grains of Gold.

Every promise is a debt.

Most pleasure embraces us but to strangle.

Better strong within than strong without.

He is nearest to God who has the fewest wants.

Nothing overcomes passion more than silence.

No one is fatigued after the exercise of forbearance.

Politeness is a wreath of flowers that adorns the world.

Indolence is the rust of the mind and the inlet of every vice.

Life and Death alike are angels and the messengers of God.

Be always studious to be in harmony with the ordinances of God.

'Tis ever common, that men are merriest when they are from home.

Our actions are our own; their consequences belong to Heaven.

Remember that in all miseries lamenting becomes fools, and action, wise folks.

The seeds of our own punishment are sown at the same time we commit sin.

The soul is not po'soned by mere errors of the head, but by evils of the heart.

Always rise from table with an appetite, and you will never sit down without one.

An able man shows his spirit by gentle words and resolute actions; he is neither hot nor timid.

To preserve one's mental constitution and nourish one's nature is the proper way to serve Heaven.

The spontaneous gifts of Heaven are of [illegible], but the strength of perseverance gains [illegible].

People who have more polish than principle, use it invisibly—plain, blunt, honest men sparingly or not at all.

Truth becomes effective by frequent contemplation; and the habitual recurrence of its precepts induces practice.

Men are sometimes accused of p ide merely because their accusers would be proud themselves if they were in their places.

The temperate are the most truly luxurious. By abstaining from most things, it is surprising how many things we enjoy.

Man is an animal that cannot long be left in safety without occupation, the growth of his fallow nature is apt to run to weeds.

In adversity be spirited and firm, and with equal prudence lessen your sail when filled with a too fortunate gale of prosperity.

With good humor and kindness, a man is more agreeable in the world than with a superior intellect devoid of gayety and goodness.

As the soil, however rich it may be, cannot be productive without culture, so the mind, without cultivation, can never produce good fruit.

A lover is a man who endeavors to be more amiable than it is possible for him to be; this is the reason why the majority of lovers are so ridiculous.

The end of learning is to know God, and out of that knowledge to love Him and imitate Him as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue.

When certain persons abuse us, let us ask ourselves what description of character it is that they subvert; we shall in many cases find this a consolatory question.

What a man knows should find its expression in what he does. The value of superior knowledge is chiefly in that it leads to a performing manhood.

Christians, like Eastern mountaineers, if they would safely climb the rugged way, must be bound together—not literally—but with cords of love and affection.

Indolence is a delightful but distressing state; we must be doing something to be happy. Action is no less necessary than thought to the instinctive tendencies of the human frame.

Goethe said, "I see no fault committed which I also might not have committed." Generosity of heart, with wide experience of life and calm impartiality of judgment will ever tend to a like humility.

Give a boy address and accomplishments, and you give him the mastery of palaces and fortunes where he goes. He has not the trouble of earning or owning them; they solicit him to enter and possess.

The complimentary small change of society must always be taken at a large discount. It is never worth its face, or anything like it. Yet it is a convenient medium of exchange, and heavy debts of gratitude that ought to be requited in better coin are often paid with it.

Mercy among the virtues is like the moon among the stars,—not so sparkling and vivid as [illegible] that hallows [illegible] first rests upon the bosom of the cloud when the storm has passed. It is the light that hovers above the judgment-seat.

An Almost Magical Effect.

Report of a thousand dyspepsia patients: "I was unable to digest my food on account of Chronic Inflammation of the Stomach and Torpidity of the Liver. The Treatment had an almost magical effect from the first. My improvement in strength, appetite and ability to digest my food was indeed wonderful." Our Treatise [illegible] Oxygen, containing large reports [illegible] sent free. Its [illegible] and its cures are direct.

Pneumocydon, Pa.

Femininities.

The skin of the codfish is now being used to make gloves.

Some of the most timid girls are not frightened by a loud bang.

You can't always tell by the wash on the line how hard a worker the widow's daughter is.

It is said that Chicago has 50,000 girls working at the various trades for average wages of $5 a week.

The French government has made the teaching of needle-work obligatory in all the female and normal schools.

Scolding, says a good-for-nothing old bachelor, is the pepper of matrimony, and the ladies are the pepper-boxes.

From an album: A woman's dress is like the envelope of a letter—the cover is frequently an index to the contents.

There is a good deal of human nature in clothes-wringers. A Kansas girl had her hand badly squeezed by one lately.

"Why do girls kiss each other, while boys do not?" Because girls have nothing better to kiss, and the boys have.

A chrysanthemum wedding is one at which the ladies carry chrysanthemums of various colors, the bridesmaids' muffs being made of those flowers.

A sensible woman says she finds cold water the best rouge, fresh air the best pearl-powder, and plain fare the best cosmetic. Ladies, try these beautifiers.

A woman will calmly permit the cat to sleep in her husband's seal-skin cap, but she will get ruffled if the cat attempts to make a hammock of her wool bonnet.

"I declare," said Julia, "you take the words right out of my mouth." "No wonder—they are so sweet," said Henry. The day was set before he left that evening.

Happy marriage—Dr. Johnson, in one of his admirable essays on married life, contends for dissimilarity of taste as best calculated to produce mutual happiness.

No woman would be happy to be the only woman in the world and have all the men worship her. She wouldn't be satisfied. She'd want another woman or two to envy her.

A little girl, whose father is never happier than when wending his span over the snow-beaten road, supplemented her evening prayer with, "And pray, dear Lord, send two more inches of snow for papa."

Old Deacon Pilkins said to himself: "Falstaff says, 'What is honor!' as though it was hard to tell. But let my wife sit behind another woman in church and she'll tell what's on her in less than five minutes."

A young Oil City lady recently visited New York, and when she returned home related how she stopped at a "palatable hotel and went up and down stairs in a cultivator. Her parents should cultivate her.

She went into a store to buy some toilet soap, and when the clerk was expatiating on its merits, about made up her mind to purchase; but when he said "it would keep off chaps," she said she didn't want that kind.

A woman caused a commotion at Waterman, Minn., by wildly chasing a big dog, and crying, "Stop him! he has swallowed a twenty-dollar bill." An butcher caught the beast, killed him, and recovered the money.

An Illinois damsel has brought suit for breach of promise against a young man, who pleads in defense that after the promise was made she was so badly spoiled by the small-pox as to release him from all obligations in the matter.

A few desks in the reading-room of the Boston Museum are set apart "for ladies only," and one of the attending police of the room, perfectly supported by the fact, says that they are never occupied, the ladies preferring to be with the gentlemen in all cases.

A girl has just been rejected at a school examination in an English town on the curious ground that she was the daughter of a publican, and therefore ineligible to enter the government examination. This is assuredly a strange phase of temperance reform.

A Chicago man was sued by his mother-in-law for his wife's board. He showed that he had repeatedly offered to take care of his lawful partner if she would but leave the old woman, and thereby won the case. The jurors had mothers-in-law themselves.

A London paper says: "A handsome actor, a good-looking, popular preacher, a charming singer, finds that the ladies go down before him as much as do the feminines before the hero of 'Tatlenes.'" We had a higher opinion of English ladies than that.

Somewhat mixed—Two little girls, aged four and six, had just got new dresses, and were on the way to [illegible]. "Oh, I have forgotten my verse. I must say it ten mins," replied the other. "It is, 'Blessed are the dressmakers.'"

A new eccentricity in dress fabrics is a woolen stuff with a pongee weft, on which animals' heads are [illegible] printed [illegible] figures' heads in black on a [illegible] ground. [illegible] "beautiful clothing for dear things" [illegible] a washing machine.

A Wyoming jury, composed of seven men and five women, were shut up for two days and two nights, and yet they could not agree. It is said that they had remained out for seventeen years there would have been no verdict as the fifth woman talked the seven men deaf in the first six hours.

To go about with cold feet is to undermine the constitution, and this very many women and girls are doing. Once no country girl was reckoned fit to be married until she had knit her pillowcase full of stockings, but it is not so now. Why? For the simple reason that thick stockings are not fashionable.

News Notes.

Embroidered kid is being used for small close bonnets.

Mr. Gladstone has sat in Parliament for half a century.

Richmond, Va., has raised $40,000 for a monument to Gen. Lee.

Mississippi is the only State in the Union without a national bank.

It cost $31,000,000 to run the city government of New York last year.

Cream and pale blue are pretty combinations for bridesmaids' attire.

Wolves are committing depredations in various portions of Arkansas.

Pullman the palace car man, is worth $20,000,000. He is 47 years old.

President Garfield's tomb is constantly kept covered with fresh flowers.

Three Butler county (Ala.) boys in one day's hunt killed fourteen foxes.

An Iowa girl husked fifty-one bushels of corn between breakfast and dinner.

Enemies of a farmer at York, Me., hanged his horse to the rafters of his stable.

An Indiana man, with chills and fever, took sixty grains of quinine, and died.

A little boy attending a wedding may wear black velvet, with red stockings.

The United States in 1881 consumed three times as much canned salmon as they did in 1880.

The courts of San Francisco granted three hundred and sixty-four decrees of divorce during last year.

A boy at Moline (Ill.) had to be whipped thirteen times before he would consent to be vaccinated.

A Colorado paper speaks of a recent wedding there as "reeking with beauty and magnificence."

There is in the South hardly a town of 5,000 inhabitants which has not a machine for making artificial ice.

The policemen of Montreal complain that they can't keep their hands warm with woolen gloves, and ask for fur ones.

Tewfik, the young ruler of Egypt, is particularly fond of poets and theologians, and keeps his court full of them.

From Kentucky to Florida stretches a nearly continuous forest, which has scarcely been touched by the lumberman.

Illinois thinks that it possesses the largest cow in the world. She is seven years old, weighs 3,400 pounds, and is 17½ hands high.

The procession at the funeral of a Mexican infant which died at Del Rio, (Tex.) marched to the music of a fiddle and accordeon.

The marriage service uniting a Chicago couple was, it is asserted, performed by departed spirits, a medium acting under their control.

At the request of the librarian of the Oxford Union, Oscar Wilde presented the Union with his book, but by a vote of the members it was refused.

General George Macdonald, now over ninety-seven years old, has the honor of being "father" of the British army. He entered the army 78 years ago.

General Sherman deserves great credit for having ruled that the officers of the regular army are not to use the private soldiers as servants without their consent.

A boy dropped a live coal down the back of a schoolfellow for fun, at Ware, Mass., and the burned youth's father thinks the joker's ought to pay $1,000 damages.

According to the new census tables the population of the country has increased 11,397,412 in ten years, a gain of 30 per cent., and equal the entire population in 1820.

A Vicksburg paper wants to know if it would not be a good thing for the Legislature of that State to pass a stringent law for the punishment of chicken thieves.

Some small Missouri towns are trying high license fees for saloons. At Marysville the figure is $1,000, and the eight saloons have paid it, while other towns demand $500 or $250.

It is reported that the Vanderbilt stables surpass those of the Roman Emperor who loved horses. There are Turkey carpets in the men's rooms, and all the surroundings are simply superb.

At the recent Sugar Cane Grower's Convention, in St. Louis, there was a curiosity exhibited in the shape of a cake made of flour ground out of orange cane and sweetened with orange cane syrup.

Having strengthened the service by the addition of powerful dogs trained to assist the sentinels on picket duty, the Russian War Office is now engaged in teaching swift hounds to act as dispatch-bearers.

The public school trustees of Hamilton, Ont., have made an imperative rule forbidding the giving of presents to teachers by their pupils. The teacher who accepts a present will be immediately dismissed.

Captain John Brooks who lately died at Bridgeport, Conn., left in his will an injunction that [illegible] terrible [illegible] heard as when he was alive.

Colorless and Cold.

A young girl deeply regretted that she was so colorless and cold. Her face was too white, and hands and feet felt as though the blood did not circulate. After one bottle of Hop Bitters had been taken she was the rosiest and healthiest girl in the town, with a vivacity and cheerfulness of mind gratifying to her friends.

HEALTH IS WEALTH.

HEALTH OF BODY IS WEALTH OF MIND.

RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

Pure blood makes sound flesh, strong bone and a clear skin. If you would have your flesh firm, your bones sound without caries, and your complexion fair use **RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.**

A remedy composed of ingredients of extraordinary medical properties [illegible] and invigorate the [illegible] of which [illegible] SAFE and PERMANENT [illegible]

No matter by what name the complaint may be designated, whether it be Scrofula, Consumption, Syphilis, Ulcers, Sores, Tumors, Boils, Erysipelas, or Salt Rheum, diseases of the Lungs, Kidneys, Bladder, Womb, Skin, Liver, Stomach, or [illegible] which [illegible] the waste and build [illegible] the system [illegible] the process of repair [illegible]

The Sarsaparillian Resolvent not only is a [illegible] restores the harmonious action of each of the organs. It establishes throughout the entire system functional harmony and supplies [illegible] with a pure and healthy current [illegible] a few days of the use [illegible] Pains, Aches, Weakness, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Ears, Legs, Throat and Glands that have [illegible] and spread, either from [illegible] or from the use of Corrosive Sublimate, may rely upon a cure if the Sarsaparillian is [illegible] sufficient time to make its impression on [illegible]

One bottle contains more of the active principles of medicine than any other preparation. Taken in Teaspoonful Doses, while others require five or six times as much. **One Dollar Per Bottle.**

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

THE CHEAPEST AND BEST MEDICINE FOR FAMILY USE IN THE WORLD.

ONE 50 CENT BOTTLE

WILL CURE MORE COMPLAINTS AND PREVENT [illegible] THAN ANY OTHER REMEDY KNOWN. [illegible] ONE APPLICATION OF READY RELIEF [illegible] PAINS OR MORBID AFFECTIONS.

THE MOMENT RADWAY'S READY RELIEF IS APPLIED EXTERNALLY OR TAKEN INTERNALLY, ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS—PAIN, FROM WHATEVER CAUSE, CEASES TO EXIST.

In all cases where pain or discomfort is experienced, or if seized with Influenza, Diphtheria, Sore Throat, Mumps, Bad Cough, Hoarseness, Bilious Colic, Inflammation of the Bowels, Stomach, Lungs, Liver, Kidneys, or with Croup, Quinsy, Fever and Ague, or with Neuralgia, Headache, Toothache, Earache, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, or with Lumbago, Pain in the [illegible] or with Diarrhœa, Cholera Morbus, [illegible] Bites, or with Strains, Cramps or Spasms, the application of RADWAY'S READY RELIEF will cure you of the worst of these complaints in a few hours.

RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS.

Perfect Purgative, Soothing Aperient, Act Without Pain, Always Reliable, and Natural in Their Operations.

A VEGETABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR CALOMEL.

Perfectly Tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse, and strengthen. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, [illegible] Biliousness, [illegible] action of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the internal Viscera. Warranted to effect a perfect cure. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs.

☞ Observe the following symptoms resulting from Diseases of the Digestive Organs: Constipation, Inward Piles, Fulness of the Blood in the Head, Acidity of the Stomach, Nausea, Heartburn, Disgust of Food, Fullness or Weight in the Stomach, Sour Eructations, Sinking or Fluttering at the Heart, Choking or Suffocating Sensations when in a lying posture, Dimness of Vision, Dots or Webs before the Sight, Fever and Dull Pain in the Head, Deficiency of Perspiration, Yellowness of the Skin and Eyes, Pain in the Side, Chest, Limbs, and Sudden Flushes of Heat, Burning in the Flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above-named disorders.

Price, 25 Cents Per Box.

We repeat that the reader must consult our books and papers on the subject of diseases and their cure, among which may be named:

"False and True."
"Radway on Irritable Urethra."
"Radway on Scrofula,"

and others relating to different classes of Diseases.

SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.

READ "FALSE AND TRUE."

Send a letter stamp to **RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren Street, New York.**

☞ Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.

There [illegible] of the value of [illegible] R. R. R. [illegible] Radway's Ready Relief, Radway's Regulating Pills, Radway's Sarsaparillian Resolvent, [illegible] Radway's Remedies [illegible]

NERVOUS DEBILITY

Vital Weakness and Prostration from overwork [illegible] cured by [illegible] RADWAY'S CURATIVE SPECIFIC No. 222. Been in use 30 years and is the most successful remedy [illegible] Humphreys' Homœopathic Medicine Co. 109 Fulton Street, New York.

WE WILL SEND WITHOUT CHARGE

[illegible] Electro-Voltaic Belts and Appliances to the [illegible] Nervous Debility, Lost Vitality, Lack of Nerve Force, Lost Manhood, Impotency, Rheumatism, Paralysis, Kidney Troubles, and many other diseases. Illustrated pamphlet free. Address VOLTAIC BELT CO., Marshall, Mich.

THE RUBENS & ARMSTRONG CO., [illegible]

AND NOW DON'T GET THE OLD WASHBOILER MENDED, but Next Wash-Day Put Aside All Little Notions and Prejudices, And Give One Trial to The Frank Siddalls Way of Washing Clothes;

☞ And remember, this Advertisement would not be inserted in this paper if there was any humbug about it. ☜

☞ After getting the opinion of noted housekeepers it was decided to adopt what is probably the most liberal proposition ever made to the public. When a lady sees that it is to her interest to try the Frank Siddalls Way of Washing Clothes, and cannot find the Soap at the store where she resides, she can get a cake by mail ONLY on the following FIVE conditions (persons who do not comply with all FIVE of these conditions must not expect any notice to be taken of their letters):

Make your promises VERY PLAIN, or the Soap will NOT be sent.

First—Inclose the retail price—10 cents—in money or stamps.
Second—Say in her letter that she saw the advertisement in the SATURDAY EVENING POST.
Third—Promise that the Soap shall be used on the whole of a regular family wash.
Fourth—Promise that the person sending will personally see that every little direction shall be strictly followed.
Fifth—Only One Cake of Soap must be sent for—it being a very expensive matter to send even one Cake.

Now, in return, the lady will get a regular ten-cent cake of Soap. To make it carry safely it will be put in a metal envelope that costs six cents; and fifteen cents in postage stamps will be put on; it will be enough to do a large wash, and there will be no excuse for any lady reader of the SATURDAY EVENING POST not doing away with all her wash-day troubles.

GENTLEMEN ARE REQUESTED NOT TO SEND FOR THE SOAP UNTIL THEIR WIVES HAVE PROMISED TO FAITHFULLY COMPLY WITH EVERY REQUIREMENT.

The Frank Siddalls Improved Way of Washing Clothes

Easy and Ladylike; Sensible Persons Follow These Rules Exactly, or Don't Buy the Soap.

The Soap Washes Freely in Hard Water. Don't Use Soda or Lye. Don't Use Borax or Ammonia. Don't Use Anything but THE FRANK SIDDALLS SOAP.

A WASHBOILER MUST NOT BE USED; NOT EVEN TO HEAT THE WASH-WATER.

Don't try the Soap on part of the Wash, but use it on the whole Wash, no matter how dirty. It answers for the finest Laces and Lace Curtains, Calico, fine Lawns, Woollens, Blankets, Flannels, etc., and also for the most Soiled Clothing of Butchers, Printers, Blacksmiths, Painters, Laborers, Mechanics, Mill Hands and Farmers.

Heat the wash-water in the tea-kettle; the wash-water should only be lukewarm, and consequently a tea-kettle will answer for even a large wash. Be sure to try the tea-kettle the first time, no matter how odd it may seem.

A wash-boiler which stands unused several days at a time will have a deposit formed on it from the atmosphere, in spite of the most careful housekeeper, which injures some delicate ingredients that are in this Soap. ALWAYS USE LUKEWARM WATER. NEVER USE VERY HOT WATER, and wash the white flannels with the other white pieces. The less water that the clothes are put to soak in the better will be the result with the Frank Siddalls Soap.

FIRST.—Cut the Soap in half—it will go further. Dip one of the articles to be washed in the tub of water. Draw it out on the wash board and rub on the Soap lightly, not missing any soiled places. Then roll the article in a tight roll, just as a piece is rolled when it is sprinkled for ironing, and lay it in the bottom of the tub under the water, and so on until all the pieces have the Soap rubbed on them and are rolled up. Then go away for twenty minutes to one hour—by the clock—(*a full hour is the best*) and let the Soap do its work.

NEXT.—After soaking the full time commence by rubbing the clothes lightly on the wash-board, and all the dirt will drop out; turn the clothes inside out so as to get at the seams, but DON'T use any more Soap; DON'T scald or boil a single piece, or they will turn yellow; and DON'T wash through TWO suds. If the wash-water gets entirely too dirty dip some of it out and add a little clean water. Never rub hard, or the dirt will be rubbed in—but rub lightly and the dirt will drop out. All dirt can be readily got out in ONE suds; if a streak is hard to wash soap it again and throw back in the suds for a few minutes—*but don't keep the soap on the wash board, nor lying in the water, or it will waste.* ☞ Do not expect this Soap to wash out stains that are SET by the old way of washing although it will often do so. For unusual STAINS, hard to remove, rub more soap on and expose to the hot sun in Summer or freezing weather in Winter. If at any time the wash-water gets too cold to be comfortable add enough water out of the tea-kettle to warm it. Should there be too much lather use less Soap next time; if not lather enough, use more Soap.

NEXT comes the Rinsing—which is also to be done in lukewarm water, and is for the purpose of getting the dirty suds out, and is done as follows: Wash each piece lightly on the wash board through the rinse-water (without using any more Soap), and see that all the dirty suds are got out. Any smart Housekeeper will know just how to do this.

NEXT, the blue-water, which can be either lukewarm or cold. Use scarcely any bluing, for this Soap takes the place of bluing. Stir a piece of the Soap in the blue-water until the water gets decidedly soapy. Put the clothes through this soapy blue-water, wring them *and hang them out to dry without any more rinsing and without scalding or boiling a single piece, no matter how soiled any of the pieces may be.*

STAINS that cannot be removed by The Frank Siddalls Soap and The Frank Siddalls Way of Washing, cannot be removed by any other soap or any washing mixture, nor by scalding or boiling.

ALWAYS make the blue-water soapy, *and the less blueing the better;* there will always be more or less of a scum on the blue-water. *Do not skim this off.* The clothes when dry will *not* smell of the Soap, but will smell as sweet as new, and will iron the easier, and will dry as white and sweet in-doors as out in the air, and the clothes will look whiter the oftener they are washed this way. Afterward wash the colored pieces and colored flannels the same way as the other pieces. It is not a clean way to soak clothes over night. Such long soaking sets dirt and makes the clothes harder to wash. ☞ The starched pieces are to be starched exactly the same way as usual, *except that a small piece of the Soap dissolved in the starch is a wonderful improvement and also makes the pieces iron much easier.*

Where clothes have to lie over-night, on account of bad drying weather, where it is not convenient to dry them in-doors, they should be washed clean exactly by the above directions, then washed through a lukewarm rinse-water exactly by the above directions, so as to get the dirty suds out, *and then thrown into a tub of clean water made quite soapy,* to stand over night; next morning wring them out of that water and put through a soapy blue-water (which can either be lukewarm or cold), and out on the line.

Don't forget to try the Frank Siddalls Soap for the Toilet, the Bath, and for Shaving. It agrees with the skin of the most delicate infant. Always leave plenty of lather on the skin. Infants washed in this way will not get prickly heat and eruptions and sores which other soap often causes. Even a person of ordinary intelligence will know for certain that the long-continued use of a soap that is excellent for washing children cannot possibly injure delicate articles washed with it, no matter how quickly it may remove dirt.

The Frank Siddalls Soap is excellent for Washing Mirrors, Window Glass, Car Windows, and all kinds of Glass Vessels; also for Washing Milk Utensils, and for Removing the Smell from the Hands after Milking. When used for washing dishes it leaves the dishcloth splendid and clean, and the dishcloth never requires scalding. Where Water is scarce, or has to be carried far, it is well to know that a few Buckets of Water will answer for doing a large Wash when the Frank Siddalls Soap is used according to Directions.

If the place you deal with will not buy the Soap to accommodate you, or you think you are being overcharged for the Soap, try some other dealer, or write to our office, and—

Address all Letters: OFFICE OF THE FRANK SIDDALLS SOAP, 718 CALLOWHILL STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

AND NOW KICK AWAY THE OLD WASH-BOILER. Remember that Prejudice is a Sign of Ignorance.

In New York the Frank Siddalls Soap is sold by such Wholesale Houses as Williams & Potter, Francis H. Leggett & Co, Burkhalter, Masten & Co., Woodruff, Spencer & Stout, Adams & Howe, Mahnken & Moorhouse, Austin, Nichols & Co., Wright, Knox & Depew, and others, and by many Retail Grocers in New York and Brooklyn; is sold in Philadelphia by every Wholesale and Retail Grocer, and rapidly growing to be the most popular Soap in the United States.

New Publications.

"The Oriental Casket," published by L. Lum Smith, and edited by Emerson Bennett, is a monthly publication same size as Post, with cover added, beautiful typographically, and showing taste and judgment in its literary features. Altogether, The Oriental Casket is an enterprise that from first page to last shows itself deserving of success, and a disposition on the part of the enterprising publisher to attain it. Published at 910 Arch St., this city. Annual subscription, $2. Single numbers, fifteen cents.

MAGAZINES.

The magnificent *Magazine of Art* for February contains the following articles, all of which are grandly illustrated: The Mountain of the Holy Cross, by Thomas Moran; A Pioneer of the Palette; The Grandfather's Blessing; The Beauty of the Fields; The Decoration of a Yacht; Ford Castle; The Manchester Mural Paintings; The Hill Collection; The Palmer Exhibition; Canossa 1087; Winter, etc., etc. As an art publication, this is the equal of anything published in the world. Cassell, Petter & Galpin, publishers, New York. Yearly subscription, $3.50. Single copies, 35 cents.

The Minnesota Medical Mirror is a new monthly journal devoted to medicine, etc. $1.00 per annum. Single copies, 10 cents. Edited and published by M. N. Cook, M. D., Cambridge City, Minn.

The contents of *Arthur's Home Magazine* for February are as usual interesting and varied. There are a number of illustrated articles, miscellany, poetry, etc., while the various departments are filled with matters of the highest home and social value. T. S. Arthur & Son, publishers, this city.

The enterprising publisher of *Vick's Illustrated Monthly Magazine* starts again with the evident determination to keep it up to the old excellence. The January number is a very treasure in all that pertains to flowers and the garden. James Vick, publisher, Rochester, N. Y. $1.25 a year.

In the February number of the *North American Review* Professor Geo. P. Fisher, of the Yale Divinity School, whose writings on the supernatural origin of Christianity, and on ecclesiastical history, are well known, comes to the defense of the Christian religion against the attacks of modern doubt and infidelity. No abler or more eminent advocate for the orthodox faith could be summoned into the controversy. Other articles in the February number of the Review are: Do the Spoils Belong to the Victor? by President Andrew D. White; A Remedy for Railway Abuses, by Isaac L. Rice; Repudiation in Virginia, by Senator John W. Johnston; and The Lancet and the Law, by Henry Bergh. North American Review, New York.

Lippincott's Magazine for February opens with an illustrated article, the first of two, on the Gulf Coast. The writer, Mr. Barton D. Jones, was sent by the Secretary of the Interior to examine the Government lands in that region, and the information he gives is novel and interesting. Dr. Felix L. Oswald has another article on Animal Pets, enlivened with anecdote and charmingly illustrated. The Capture of Derne, by Charles Burr Todd, revives an almost forgotten episode in American history,—the expedition against Tripoli, under General William Eaton. As usual, a large amount of space is devoted to fiction. Grant's Luck, by Mary Ellis Smith, is a powerfully-written story. A Vicar in Ebony, by M. A. Collins; and Summer and Lazarus, by Margaret Hosmer, are short and lively, while the second instalment of Stephen Guthrie awakens a strong interest and contains many admirable touches. There are poems by Rose Terry Cooke, Charlotte Perry, and Charles L. Hildreth, and many interesting papers in the editorial departments. Lippincott & Co., this city.

After the new cover, the first midwinter issue (February) of *The Century* is chiefly distinguished by its unusual range of popular contributors. Mr. Emerson has a paper on The Superlative; it is an incisive plea for temperance in speech and conduct. Mr. Longfellow's melodious poem, "Hermes Trismegistus, celebrates a long-forgotten semi-mythical author of Egypt. The subject of Dean Stanley's paper is the late Frederick W. Robertson. Mrs. Burnet's novel, Through One Administration, is already provoking surmises as to what she is going to make of her interesting Washington material. Mr. Howells' Modern Instance bids fair to exceed in rapidity of action and in conciseness any of his previous books. Mr. Stockton's contribution is a story entitled Euphemia Among the Pelicans. Mrs. Jackson (H. H.) under the caption of Jacob Stolz's Beat, describes the picturesque and curious features of the Moravian settlement at Bethlehem, Pa., which is fully illustrated. Mr. Stedman, Mr. Bunner, Mr. Maurice Thompson, Miss Edith M. Thomas and others contribute poems, and there is a paper on The Proposed National Library Building, and a plea by W. C. Wilkinson for justice to the memory of Webster. The Departments are, as usual, filled with matter of the very best. The Century, New York.

Humorous.

Half a dozen young scapegraces are going about in Minnesota vaccinating the people with mucilage.

When a girl whom you are visiting freely puts coals on the fire, it is a sign that you needn't go home just yet.

In stocks: "Were you a bull or a bear?" asked an acquaintance of a gentleman. "I was neither," he replied; "I was an ass."

"Why did you not send for me sooner?" asked a doctor of a patient. "Well, you see, doctor, I couldn't make up my mind to do anything desperate."

"Will My Darling Come Again?" is the title of a poem sent by Marion. We don't know, Marion, but you might send him word that the dog is tied up, and see.

Handsome Jack: "Why, of course a dress coat is the proper garment to wear at a swell dinner. It doesn't button in front, and gives you a chance to swell."

The roller skater does not break through the ice and get drowned. His legs roll out from under him, and he pounds the floor with the back of his head. This doesn't hurt the floor at all.

A Canadian paper has an inquiring mind who asked, "Is it right for a minister to eat fowl won at a raffle?" To which the learned editor replies: "That depends on the age of the fowl."

A little girl had been scolded by her grandmother. She picked up her kitten, and, caressing it, said: "I wish one of us three was dead; and it ain't you, kitty, and it ain't me."

A Sure Cure for Piles.

Do you know what it is to suffer with Piles? If you do, you know what is one of the worst torments of the human frame. The most perfect cure ever known is Kidney-Wort. It cures constipation, and then its tonic action restores health to the diseased bowels and prevents recurrence of disease. Try it without delay. The dry and the liquid are both sold by druggists.—Globe.

Consumption Cured.

Since 1870 Dr. Sherar has each year sent from his office the means of relief and cure to thousand afflicted with disease. The correspondence necessitated by this work becoming too heavy for him, I came to his aid. He now feels constrained to relinquish it entirely, and has placed in my hands the formula of that simple vegetable remedy discovered by an East Indian missionary, and found so effective for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Diseases; also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous complaints. Its remarkable curative powers have been proven in many thousand cases, and, actuated by the desire to relieve suffering humanity, I gladly assume the duty of making it known to others. Address me, with stamp, naming this paper, and I will mail you, free of charge, the recipe of this wonderful remedy, with full directions for its preparation and use, printed in German, French or English. W. A. NOYES, *149 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.*

Important.

When you visit or leave New York City, save Baggage Expressage and Carriage Hire, stop at GRAND UNION HOTEL, opposite Grand Central Depot. 450 elegant rooms, fitted up at a cost of one million dollars, reduced to $1 and upwards per day. European Plan. Elevator. Restaurant supplied with the best. Horse-cars, stages, and elevated railroads to all depots. Families can live better for less money at the Grand Union Hotel than at any other first-class hotel in the city.

Worth Sending For.

Dr. J. H. Schenck, of this city, has just published a book on "Diseases of the Lungs and How They Can be Cured," which he offers to send free, postpaid, to all applicants. It contains valuable information for all who suppose themselves afflicted with, or liable to, any disease of the throat or lungs. Address Dr. J. H. SCHENCK & SON, 832 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa. Mention this paper.

A UNIQUE machine, indispensable to the farmer or poultry-raiser, is the Frank Wilson five-dollar bone and shell-grinding mill, advertised on this page. The high value of bone-meal and shell is everywhere recognized by progressive agriculturists, and nothing has ever been devised which for simplicity, cheapness and good work, can be compared to this mill. Send for illustrated catalogue.

Old Gold Bought.—Silver and Platinum of all kinds. Full value paid. J. L. Clark, Reliable Refiner of all Residues containing gold or silver, 222 Filbert St., Philadelphia, Pa. Send by mail or express. Mention THE POST.

Those of our readers who have not yet sent for a cake of The Frank Siddalls Soap had better do so before the remarkably liberal offer is withdrawn. The Frank Siddalls Soap is destined to have an immense sale, and as we understand it is in contemplation to establish agencies for its sale all over the United States, our readers who desire to aid in the introduction of what is one of the most remarkable inventions of modern science, would do well to avail themselves of the offer. Persons must not send for more than one cake, and when sending for a cake must not send for any of their friends, the rule being that the one who wants the Soap must send for it.

☞ When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.

Good Men Wanted everywhere capable of earning $6 to $10 per day selling our new braided **Silver Mould White Wire Clothes Line**, warranted to last 10 years. Please at sight. Sells readily at almost every house. Agents continually reporting grand success. Counties reserved. *Interesting catalogue free.* Address GIRARD WIRE MILLS, Philadelphia.

38 Valuable Receipts and Secrets worth Several Hundred Dollars for only $1.00. Address F. L. NEUFELD, M. D., Beatty's P. O., Westmoreland Co., Pa.

40 CARDS all Chromo, Glass & Motto, in Case, name in gold and Jet 10c. Wolf & Co., Westville, Ct.

DR. C. W. BENSON, of Baltimore, Md., in the course of his practice discovered what now are renowned in medical practice—viz., a combination of Celery and Chamomile in the shape of Pills. They are used by the profession at large, and constantly recommended by them.

It is not a patent medicine. It is the result of his own experience in practice. They are a *sure cure* for the following special diseases, and are worthy of a trial by all intelligent sufferers. They are prepared expressly to cure sick headache, nervous headache, dyspeptic headache, neuralgia, paralysis, sleeplessness, dyspepsia and nervousness, and *will cure* any case. The Doctor's great remedy for Skin Disease, called "Dr. Benson's Skin Cure, is exceedingly valuable, and greatly sought after by all persons who have skin diseases or bad complexion. An excellent toilet dressing.

Sold by all druggists. Price, 50 cents a box. Depot, 106 North Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. By mail, two boxes for $1.00, or six boxes for $2.50, to any address.

DR. C. W. BENSON'S

DR. BENSON'S SKIN CURE AND PILLS

SKIN CURE

Is Warranted to Cure

ECZEMA, TETTERS, HUMORS, INFLAMMATION, MILK CRUST, ALL ROUGH SCALY ERUPTIONS, DISEASES OF HAIR AND SCALP, SCROFULA ULCERS, PIMPLES and TENDER ITCHINGS on all parts of the body. It makes the skin white, soft and smooth; removes tan and freckles, and is the BEST toilet dressing in THE WORLD. Elegantly put up, two bottles in one package, consisting of both internal and external treatment.

All first class druggists have it. Price $1. per package.

HOSTETTER'S CELEBRATED

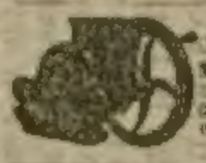
STOMACH BITTERS

A remedy with such a reputation as Hostetter's Stomach Bitters deserves a fair trial. If you are dyspeptic, your malady will eventually yield to it; if you are feeble, lack flesh, and feel despondent, it will both build and cheer you up; if you are constipated, it will relieve; and if bilious, healthfully stimulate your liver. Don't despond, but make this effort in the right direction.

For sale by all Druggists and Dealers generally.

THE DIAMOND DYES.

are the Simplest, Cheapest, Strongest and most brilliant Dyes ever made. One 10 cent package will color more goods than any 15 or 25 ct. dye ever sold. 24 popular colors. Any one can color any fabric or fancy article. Send for any color wanted and be convinced. Set of fancy cards, samples of ink and 1 W'k'g. dye, all mailed for 10 cents. WELLS, RICHARDSON & CO., Burlington, Vt.



Grind your own Bone Meal and Oyster Shells in the $5.00 HAND MILL. (Frank Wilson's Pat.) Ill. circular and testimonials furnished on application. A peck in 15 minutes. Address WILSON BROS., Sole Manufacturers, Easton, Pa.

A STARTLING SENSATION!

Nature's Last Secret!

Another Revolution!

Of interest to every reader of this paper, who appreciates merit, beauty and sterling value.

In all ages diamonds have been esteemed the most precious among precious stones. Modern invention, however, has just produced an imitation so marvelously perfect that expert judges fail to detect the difference. Why pay a fabulous price for a diamond when a perfect substitute can be had for nothing? The new diamonds are worn universally in Europe, and their reputation is being rapidly established here.

The imitations are called **Diamante Brilliants**, they are perfect gems, and all set in SOLID GOLD. They are mounted, set, wear and look like genuine diamonds. The best judges fail to detect the imitation from the real; they are produced chemically—are worn in the best society and are really the only perfect substitute ever produced, as they possess all the purity, brilliancy and penetrating lustre peculiar to *old mine diamonds of the first water.* We are sending out hundreds of them daily, and could fill a volume with the candid expressions of surprise and delight of recipients, from Maine to California. The illustrations below give an accurate outline of the style of setting the

We use but two sizes of **Diamante Brilliants**—the earrings and ring, each 1-karat stone, the stud 2-karats. They are not dollar-store goods, but are sold in Philadelphia for $5 to $15 each.

We don't sell **Diamante Brilliants**, but use them as a Premium for the Post. We will endeavor to secure the largest subscription list in the country; and we propose to work for it, and money for it, and use every honorable means to attain our object. With such expensive premiums we lose money on the first year's subscription; and if we fail to do all we promise and give a premium, which does not meet or exceed the expectations of our readers, our work is thrown away, and next year we can't expect to find you a member of the Post family.

We have studied the premium problem thoroughly, and we offer our **Diamante Brilliant Premiums**, confidently believing that subscribers who receive them will not only help us get others, but continue our patrons for many years. *The new diamonds* cost more money and are worth more than any premium ever offered before, for every subscriber is ready getting

TEN DOLLARS FOR NOTHING.

We make business and can't afford to mislead or misrepresent. No more suitable present could be selected for anybody.

Our Offer.—On receipt of three dollars we agree to send *The Saturday Evening Post* one year—52 times, and any one of the *Diamante Brilliants*.

We warrant them to be solid gold (neither rolled gold nor plated). And guarantee their prompt and safe delivery. A club of two subscribers to The Post, one year, accompanied by $3, entitles the sender to either the Ring, Stud, or Earrings, Free. A club of three, one year, and $6, entitles the sender to any two of the three premiums, free. A club of four, one year, and $8, entitles the sender to the Ring, Stud, and Earrings, free; or, for $5, we will extend your subscription two years, and send either Ring, Stud, or Earrings as a premium, free. For $6, will extend subscription three years, and forward any two of the articles as a premium. For $8, will extend subscription four years, and send all three premiums, free. Club subscribers remit any one premium by sending $1 instead of $3. All premiums sent by registered mail. Postage on paper and premiums prepaid in every case. NOTE.—*If the premiums are not as represented in every particular, return them at once, and we will return your money promptly.* The Premiums may be sent to one address and the paper to another.

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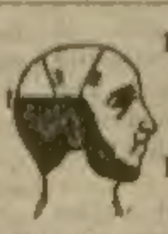
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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

COMBINATIONS of material are becoming more and more elaborate. Skirt fronts are now almost invariably of another fabric, or at least, quite differently trimmed from the dress. Such trimmings are of infinite variety; skirt fronts are ornamented with embroidery, flounces, passementerie, bows of ribbon, or simply puffed in wide waves, or again pleated, the pleats meeting in the middle.

This skirt front, of whatever style, simulates an underskirt, of which only the front middle width is seen. Some sort of border always frames it round, dividing it from the side widths which, with the puffs at the back, form the upper dress. The prettiest of these borders, because it is the simplest, is one we have lately seen upon a dress from Worth's, five perpendicular pleats are then near the waist-line.

These pleats are made either of the same fabric as that employed for the side and back widths, or of a material different from the skirt-front and upper dress, or else they are covered with embroidery or passementerie ornaments, which make them different from the rest of the toilet, and mark them as the framing of the skirt-front.

Satin, moire, and plush, are the silk tissues most generally employed for handsome winter toilets.

There is a great variety of satins, and still greater of plushes; as for moire, it is combined with all tissues, even woolen ones.

Indian shawl tissues are prettily employed in the draperies of dresses, in combination with satin or moire, and also with fine cloth or cashmere.

A dress of this style is of navy blue cloth with paniers and tournure of the Indian shawl texture. Another dress is of black satin, the skirt entirely kilted, the deep waist finished with paniers of Madras satin.

Another costume of the same style is of maroon diagonal and plush to match. The short skirt is entirely kilted. Plain bodice, with small standing-up officer's collar. Very narrow plain sleeves, and upon the wrist-band three buttons of maroon enamel with a pattern in gold. Similar buttons upon the bodice. A plush drapery encircles the lower part of the bodice, and is tied behind into wide loops and lappels falling over the skirt.

A charming evening dress was made thus. The skirt was made of white nuns' veiling and Spanish lace, and was covered from top to bottom with puffing and shirring, the bottom being trimmed with a Spanish lace flounce falling over a double pleating. The corsage *a la Vierge* was entirely shirred. A broad lace sash was tied loosely in front about the round waist, and fell in cascades which covered the whole front to the flounce on the bottom of the skirt. A lace pelerine encircled the neck.

The half-long sleeves were without lining. This dress is easily made, and may be of any light color—pale pink or light blue—mixed with Spanish lace.

A pretty walking dress is of bronze green basket-work woolen material, the bodice plain and long-waisted, with one deep facing upon the left side edged with a narrow band of plush to match, and fastened upon the shoulder by an artistic brooch of old silver.

A deep plain collar shows from under this facing. This polonaise-bodice recalls the *bolte* by a deep plain facing fastening at the waist-line behind by one plain old silver button. The front is fastened slantways to the waist-line by three large similar buttons. This part is completed by a large lappel, somewhat resembling the drapery of a military cloak. The skirt is pleated in front, and also pleated behind under the puff. It is trimmed round the foot with a deep band of plush, put on plain, ten inches deep. The sleeves are plain, with revers fastened with one button. Wrist-bands edged with a band of plush.

A stylish costume is of stamped velvet silk and satin. The skirt has two flounces of silk, bordered with bands of stamped velvet, the upper of which is gathered about six inches with runners very close together.

Over this is another flounce, in front only, with a deeper piece of gathering, which reaches to the paniers of satin, with deep fringe, that are continued to form the drapery behind. The bodice is a jacket one, of velvet, with gathered waistcoat of satin, and is put on the skirt under the paniers, which button down upon it, slightly raised over the hips.

This way of putting on the paniers forms a trimming to them, the buttons being of finely cut, put on close together in threes, and the buttonholes large ones bound with velvet.

The sleeves are of velvet, with puffs at wrist, and shoulder of satin. A small bonnet completes the costume. It is of velvet, the crown, a flat one, worked thickly with jet, and a fringe of the same resting upon the hair, the trimming consisting of a wreath of black ostrich trips, which is full in front and narrows to the back; the strings reversible, ribbon velvet on one side, satin on the other.

Brown and grey costumes are always popular, particularly the former, in which the tints are most rich and beautiful, velveteen and plush which do not look well in all colors, coming out particularly well in these.

For grey ones camel's hair and soft fluffy materials are used, trimmed very often with plush or fur, such as chinchilla, otter, or seal, the cloaks or jackets being lined with bright colored satin of which a glimpse is at anyrate seen in the sleeves, with generally a balayeuse to correspond. I give a description of one of each color. First, a handsome brown costume made of a rather thick and very rich materials, like a silk cashmere combined with plush.

The skirt has three narrow gathered flounces, each bordered with plush, and the tablier is covered with alternate bands of shirred material and plush ones. The full drapery behind is made with two scarves taken from either side of the skirt forming slight paniers which are crossed under the tails of the jacket bodice and looped with thick silk cord and tassels beneath, the ends being handsomely fringed.

The bodice which fastens in front with buttons covered with iridescent beads is pointed there, the basques bound with plush cut away slightly over the hips and into two rather long tails behind.

The sleeves are quite tight, with very deep cuffs of plush buttoned to the elbow. An outer garment made of the same material is worn with this costume. It is something more like a Dolman than a Mother Hubbard, for the sleeves are plain and loose although it is slightly gathered to fit at the neck, and a novelty in this is its adornment.

It is worked all over in small sprays about four inches apart, with iridescent beads and yellow silk, and the fringe, like that upon the scarves on the skirts, is a very deep one, composed chiefly of beads with a little brown and yellow silk introduced. The small close-fitting bonnet is of brown straw the crown worked with beads, and the brim covered with folds of velvet to match, between which are some of yellow satin fastened with three very small sunflowers. On the left side, strings of velvet and satin ribbon alternate stripes of yellow and brown.

A small muff is made to match, of velvet lined with yellow silk and ornamented with sunflowers and ribbon, is of camel's hair of very light shade, matching the palest tint of the chinchilla with which it is trimmed. It is simply made with a deep box-pleated flounce reaching to the knee, and above that a slight drapery bordered with a band of fur.

The hat has a straight piece draped fully with a band of fur at the edge. The jacket is rather long, and tight-fitting, with a deep band of fur all round, and tippet and deep cuffs, but color and tone is given this very simple costume by a scarf of satin shaded from pale pink to darkest crimson, which is fastened under the second flounce on the left side, crosses the front diagonally, and is hidden under the skirt of the jacket to emerge again and mingle with the drapery behind.

The hat is large, of felt, and with a beaver brim trimmed with grey ostrich feathers and a large bow of shaded satin.

Skating dresses prepared already in the hope that we may have some this year, are chiefly of velvet or velveteen, trimmed with fur, often without any flounces or trimming upon the skirt, and as examples I may quote two. The first, of ruby velvet and satin, has the chief part of the dress made of the former. It is in the form of a short Princess dress, or long paletot, showing the kilted flounce of an underskirt of satin, and opening down the front over the same, shirred from the waist to the flounce. The velvet is bordered all round with black fur, has outside pockets at the back, trimmed to match, and a muff, deep cuffs, and a tippet of the same. The hat is a small toque of fur with a knot of velvet in front, fastened by a silver dagger,

Fireside Chat.

PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS FOR KNITTING USEFUL ARTICLES.

INFANTS' POLISH BOOTS.—1 oz. of crimson, 1¼ oz. of white single Berlin wool. Knitting pins No. 16. Cast on 28 stitches with the crimson wool, and knit 8 plain rows. 4th row—knit 2, increase 1 by picking up the thread which lies below the second stitch and knitting it, knit 26. 5th row—plain. 6th row—knit 2, increase 1, knit 27. 7th row—plain. 8th row—knit 2, increase 1, knit 28. 9th row—plain. 10th row—knit 2, increase 1, knit 27, increase 1, knit 2. 11th row—plain. 12th row—knit 2, increase 1, knit 29, increase 1, knit 2. 13th row—plain. 14th row—knit 2, knit increase 1, knit 30. 15th row—plain. 16th row—knit 2, increase 1, knit 34. 17th row—plain. 18th row—plain. 19th row—knit 13, then keeping the other stitches still on the needle, knit these 13 stitches backwards and forwards for 25 more rows. 45th row—knit 13, and cast on 24 stitches. 46th row—plain. 47th row—plain. 48th row—knit 2, knit 2 together, knit 33. 49th row—plain. 50th row—knit 2, knit 2 together, knit 32. 51st row—plain. 52nd row—knit 2, knit 2 together, knit 27, knit 2 together, knit 2. 53rd row—plain. 54th row—knit 2, knit 2 together, knit 25. knit 2 together, knit 2. 55th row—plain. 56th row—knit 2, knit 2 together, knit 27. 57th row—plain. 58th row—knit 2, knit 2 together, knit 26. 59th row—plain. 60th row—knit 2, knit 2 together, knit 25. Knit 3 plain rows. Cast off. Then with the same needle on which you still have 24 stitches, pick up 13 stitches across the instep, and 24 stitches along the other side, knitting each stitch as you pick it up, knit 1 plain row, and cast off all. This completes the boot. For the sock, take the white wool, and pick up 15 stitches across the instep. (In all the picking up now take the back threads only.) 1st row—purl. 2nd row—knit 2, make 1, knit 4, slip 1, knit 2 together, pass the slip stitch over, knit 4, make one, knit 2. 3rd row—purl. 4th row—same as the second row. 5th row—purl. 6th row—same as the second row. 7th row—purl. 8th row—knit 2, make 1, knit 4, slip 1, knit 2 together, pass the slip stitch over, knit 4, make 1, knit 2, pick up 18 stitches along the side, that is, missing the first 5 stitches and picking up to thence the end. 9th row—purl 53, and then pick up 18 stitches along the other side. 10th row—knit 2, make 1, knit 2 together, knit 2, make 1, knit 4, slip 1, knit 2 together, pass the slip stitch over, knit 4, make 1, knit 3, make 1, knit 4, slip 1, knit 2 together, pass the slip stitch over, knit 4, make 1, knit 3, make 1, knit 4, slip 1, knit 2 together, pass the slip stitch over, knit 4, make 1, knit 2, knit 2 together, make 1, knit 2. 11th row—purl. Repeat the tenth and eleventh rows sixteen times, or until you have the leg as high as is desired. Then knit 7 plain rows, and cast off. Sew the boot up. Run a crimson ribbon in the holes round the ankle, and tie with a bow in front.

Square Shawl.—The following is the simplest way of making a square shawl in plain knitting, using Scotch yarn or single Berlin wool, and knitting pins No. 10. Or a very handsome shawl may be made with wool arrasene and knitting pins No. 6. Cast on as many stitches as are required for the size of the shawl, and knit in rows backwards and forwards until you have a square. A border may afterwards be knitted and sewn on, or a fringe knotted in.

Canadian Cloud.—Knitting pins No. 6. White merino or Shetland wool. Cast on 124 stitches, and knit 2 plain rows. 3rd row—slip 1, knit 3, knit 2 together, *make 1, knit 1, make 1, knit 2 together, knit 3, knit 2 together; repeat from*, and end the row with 3 plain. 4th row—plain. Repeat the third and fourth row 3 times. Knit 2 plain rows. 13th row—slip 1, knit 7, knit 2 together, *make 1, knit 1, make 1, knit 2 together, knit 3, knit 2 together; repeat from* and end the row with 7 plain. 14th row—plain. Repeat the thirteenth and fourteenth rows 3 times. Knit 2 plain rows. Repeat from the third row for the length required, and cast off after having completed the twelfth row of the pattern. A cloud should be about two yards long, to go twice round the neck and once over the head. One end is to be drawn together and finished off with a large tassel, the other end may be fringed. Or if you like to have a lace along the sides of the cloud continue it round the end also.

Lace Border for Shawl or Cloud.—Cast on 19 stitches. 1st row—slip 1, knit 2, make 1, knit 2 together, knit 1, make 1 and knit 2 together six times, knit 1. 2nd row—slip 1, knit 2, purl 1 and knit 2 five times, purl 1, knit 3, make 1, knit 2 together, knit 1. 3rd row—slip 1, knit 2, make 1, knit 2 together, knit 20. 4th row—cast off 6, knit 15 make 1, knit 2 together, knit 1. Repeat from the first row.

Gentleman's Comforter.—Decidedly the best stitch for comforters is the Brioche stitch, as it is thick and elastic, and yet is alike on both sides. With single Berlin wool of any color, and No. 9 needles, cast on any even number of stitches according to the width required; then work as follows—make 1, slip 1, putting the needle in front and about to purl it, knit 1 all along. Every succeeding row is the same, excepting that when knitting 1 you will knit the stitch that was slipped in the preceding row and the thread that lies over it together. A comforter should be about two yards long, to go twice round the neck, and with ends to wrap over and cover the chest. Add a fringe at each end.

"LOOK here, sir, don't you see that sign?" irately shouted a local owner of premises that he was doing his best to keep private. The person addressed, who was meandering placidly across them, replied laconically, "Yes," and the landed proprietor more sharply, "Why don't you mind it?" "Because it's a lie; it says, no crossing here, but I'll be blamed if I want a better crossing than this," and he sauntered leisurely on. The sign now reads: "All persons are forbidden crossing this lot."

Correspondence.

OLD FRIEND, (Hopkinsville, Ky.)—From what we have been able to glean they were all members of the Church of England.

C. G., (Lewisburg, W. Va.)—We do not publish the addresses of such business houses in this column. Forward a postal addressed to yourself and we will send you the required information.

PENN, (Concord, N. H.)—Penn's treaty with the Indians, which is said to have been the only treaty never broken, occurred within the limits of the city of Philadelphia, under an immense elm tree. This tree stood until about 1832, when it was uprooted by a violent gale of wind. The spot is now marked by a monument.

JENNIE, (Mason, Ill.)—In regard to a business you had better consult with your parents and friends. They know more about you, and will be able to give better advice than we can. In the matter of finishing your education we think you have made a mistake. In the letter you send to us—we mention it in kindness, and only that you may profit by it—there are several glaring errors of spelling, and a total disregard of the rules of punctuation.

COUNTRY BOY, (Hamilton, O.)—To make birdlime: Boil the middle part of holly bark seven or eight hours in water, drain it, and lay it in heaps upon the ground covered with stones or weights, for two or three weeks till reduced to a mucilage. Beat this in a mortar, wash it in rain-water, and knead it till free from extraneous matters. Put it into earthen pots, and in four or five days it will be fit for use. A substitute for birdlime is made by boiling linseed oil for some hours, until it becomes a viscid paste.

MAMIE, (Camden, N. J.)—The gentleman may have had no opportunity to call in response to your invitation, or he may be of a different nature. Very many gentlemen who are fond of ladies society, are restrained from calling on them, or mixing in their company by an unconquerable bashfulness, or a lack of confidence in their powers to please. 2. The gentleman probably meant no disrespect in resuming his reading after being introduced to you, evidently supposing your call was upon other members of the family, who would entertain you.

I. M. I., (Hollywood, Ark.)—When a visiting card is turned down at the upper left hand corner it means that the card has been left in person by the one whose name it bears. The reason for this is that cards are sometimes sent by a messenger, in which case the card is not turned. The turning of the other corners, we believe, also conveys a particular meaning potent with deep meaning to those who consider them important. In the case of notes without envelope we suppose that it is done to keep the note closed more than anything else.

L. E. K., (Cottage Grove, Ind.)—We have not the rules handy just at present. You can, however, devise a set to suit yourself and correspondent. Let the stamp when in the right hand corner of the envelope signify "all right," "I'm satisfied," "I love you," or any agreeable meaning you choose to give it. Vary the meaning with each corner and position of the stamps. A most impressive final touch to the system would be a reversal of the stamp, putting it head downwards. This might mean "I am ready to stand on my head for you." Further than this, we think it impossible for a lover's devotion to go and no reasonable girl—certainly not in a flirtation, would ask a stronger expression of affection.

PATRICK, PETTY, (Gaffney, S. C.)—We think the girl of sixteen who has engaged herself to another man, wants to break the engagement, has three beaux and prefers you, is just the sort of girl for a sensible man—to have nothing to do with. Her conduct shows she does not know herself, and forgetfulness of this kind in a woman is dangerous. She is too young, anyway, to think of marriage, supposing she was faultless in other respects. Do not visit her as an accepted lover for a few years, though you might keep up the acquaintance. If in that time you notice a proper development of proper womanhood—which does not show itself in a profusion of beaux or recklessness in regard to marriage promises—you could perhaps begin to consider her in a matrimonial light. 2. Every kind of ring is used for an engagement ring, and in many cases, even where the parties are well-to-do, none at all is used. Fashion decrees the use of a solitaire or single stone diamond ring, but a ring of plain gold is just as appropriate and much cheaper. 3. Address Claxton & Co., Publishers, this city, for the book.

INQUIRER, (Austin, Tex.)—Why the card, nine of diamonds, is called "The Curse of Scotland," cannot be satisfactorily explained. You are quite right, however, in saying that the expression is a common one in Scotland; everybody uses it. We have heard its origin thus explained: In the distracted state of the country during the reign of Mary, a man named George Campbell attempted to steal the crown out of Edinburgh Castle. He did not succeed in getting away with the crown itself, but did manage to abstract nine valuable diamonds, and to get off with them out of the country. To replace these a heavy tax was laid upon the people, which, being burdensome and oppressive, was by them termed the Curse of Scotland; and, until quite recently, the card itself was called "George Campbell." And thus: It will be remembered that the order for the cruel massacre of the Highlanders at Glencoe, during the reign of William of Orange, was signed by the eldest son of the Earl of Stair, who was, at the time, Secretary of State for Scotland. Well, the family bears nine diamonds on its shield; and the indignant people, not daring to stigmatize the Lord of Stair as the Curse of Scotland, applied the term to his shield.

ALICE M. M., (Baltimore, Md.)—If your husband really desires to reform, let him read the following advice—The desire for stimulants, produced by the continued use of alcoholic liquors, being in many cases almost a mania, the best way to conquer this craving is to provide a substitute to the shape of some harmless beverage, as there are very few persons who have the will or the strength of mind to discontinue the use of liquor at once; the intellect becoming weakened by a course of dissipation. The following mixture is highly recommended in cases of this kind, to be taken in quantities equal to an ordinary dram, and as often as the desire for liquor occurs—Sulphate of iron, five grains; peppermint water, eleven drachms; spirits of nutmeg, one drachm. This preparation acts as a tonic and stimulant, and so partially supplies the place of the accustomed liquor, and prevents the absolute physical and moral prostration that follows a sudden breaking off from the use of stimulating drinks. In the course of time the unnatural appetite will have become conquered, and the brain will resume its usual vigor, enabling the person to resist the desire, should he be tempted at any time to return to this soul and body-destroying habit.